AN ASSESSMENT OF HIRING PRACTICES FOR HEAD FOOTBALL COACHES AT THE "POWER 5" NCAA DIVISION I FBS LEVEL

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This study examines the hiring practices for head football coaches at the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivison (FBS) "Power 5" level. The research assesses the hiring practices used by athletic departments and evaluates various components of the hiring process that are utilized when hiring a head football coach. Additionally, this study seeks to identify trends and common practices used by Athletic Directors when hiring head football coaches.

Participating Athletic Directors completed a survey questionnaire which asked them to share insights regarding their personal experience with hiring head football coaches. The results of the study revealed that 1) the majority of athletic departments do not have a written framework or guidelines for hiring head football coaches, but many Athletic Directors do follow their own specific process; 2) many Athletic Directors have little education or training on hiring head football coaches, and mostly rely on "on the job training"; 3) search firms bring value to the process when assisting Athletic Directors in their head football coach search; and 4) the majority of Athletic Directors would support a policy similar to the NFL's Rooney Rule that would mandate at least one minority candidate to be interviewed during the hiring process for a head football coaching vacancy.

Evidence from this study could encourage Athletic Directors and university presidents to consider the benefits of a best practices framework or specific process when trying to hire the most qualified and effective head football coach. Information obtained from this study may also help university leaders analyze their current hiring practices, policies, and processes, and make any necessary changes for identifying and hiring the best head football coach.

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PREFACE

I wish to thank my advisor, Dr. John Weidman, for his guidance and support throughout this process. I would also like to thank my previous advisor, Dr. John Yeager, who retired upon completion of my doctoral coursework. Thank you also to the members of my dissertation committee – Dr. Susan Albrecht, Dr. James Jacob, Dr. Stewart Sutin, and Dr. John Weidman – who provided valuable feedback and perspective that were instrumental in shaping my progress and the final outcome of my study. I would also like to acknowledge the Pitt Athletic Department community. Thanks to my colleagues and friends within Pitt Athletics for their support throughout this project.

My wife, Lauren, has been the constancy one needs when completing a significant project such as a dissertation. Thank you for your encouragement, patience, and support with this project. This accomplishment would have not been possible without your love and support.

Lastly, I am dedicating this dissertation to my parents, Steve and Maggie Saunders, as well as the entire Saunders family. I could not have been blessed with better parents and family. From a young age, my brother, Josh, sister, Jodi, and I were taught many important values by our parents and family members. We learned very early in our childhood that nothing great is accomplished without integrity and hard work. I know some members of our family that are not with us today but were very influential in my life would be proud. Thank you all for helping me accomplish my goals.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Legendary head football coaches (e.g., Paul "Bear" Bryant, University of Alabama; Woody Hayes, Ohio State University; Eddie Robinson, Grambling State University) are considered by many to be icons at their respective higher education institution. Winning championships, graduating players, and engaging with internal and external constituents are considered requirements for the head football coach position at most Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) institutions. The goal of every university president and athletic director is to hire a head football coach with exceptional qualities whom he/she believes may be among the next generation of legendary coaches. Universities want a special individual who will run a clean program, win nationally televised games, and serve as a catalyst for bringing in donation dollars and prospective students.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The hiring of a head football coach at most Division I (FBS) institutions is a very important decision that is often made by a university athletic director and/or president, and is typically a very public matter. Generally, the head football coach is among the top income earners at a Division I university and is among the university's most visible representatives. Head football coaches at most institutions are considered key personnel and are often seen as influential figures

on campus. The right hire could enhance the image of the university and may provide multiple levels of positivity that may spread beyond the intercollegiate athletics program. On the other hand, the wrong hire could tarnish the reputation of the university and could cost the university millions of dollars. When hiring a new head football coach, there are no NCAA standards or national standards, and generally, there are no clear guidelines at the institutional level. In response to the lack of guidelines, a best practices framework is needed for hiring head football coaches. The best practices framework may serve as a helpful tool for FBS athletic directors and presidents, along with other key stakeholders. The purpose of this study is to examine the hiring practices of head football coaches at the Division I (FBS) "Power 5" level (i.e., institutions within the following athletic conferences: Atlantic Coast Conference, Big Ten Conference, Pac-12 Conference, Big 12 Conference, and Southeastern Conference). The research assesses the hiring practices used by athletic departments and evaluates various components of the hiring process when hiring a head football coach. Additionally, the research seeks to identify the benefits of sound hiring practices and the challenges of hiring a head football coach. In light of the gaps that were uncovered after reviewing the literature on head coach hiring processes, this study examines the hiring practices used by colleges and universities competing in the NCAA Division I (FBS) "Power 5". Specifically, this study is designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the specific frameworks used for hiring head football coaches?
2. What stakeholders are involved in the hiring process for a head football coach?
3. How often are external search firms (outside consultants) used in the process for hiring head football coaches? What are the benefits?
4. To what extent do athletic departments consider diversity in the hiring process?

5. How important is “fit” when considering candidates and hiring a head football coach?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The intent of this literature review is to present a framework for the research study in regards to the hiring practices used by Athletic Directors when hiring head football coaches in NCAA Division I (FBS) "Power 5". The review begins with specific highlights in regards to the significance of intercollegiate athletics and the head football coach position at Division I FBS institutions. Then, the review provides an overview of personnel selection and the literature that shapes the mechanisms for hiring. In light of the gaps in the literature regarding head coach personnel selection within athletic departments, this review provides a foundation for personnel selection within organizations and universities more broadly. The review then examines relevant theories involved in personnel selection. The literature review concludes with an overview of factors that may impact hiring and personnel selection within Division I intercollegiate athletics.

2.1 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS AND THE HEAD FOOTBALL COACHING POSITION AT A DIVISION I INSTITUTION

2.1.1 The significance of intercollegiate athletics from development and alumni/student relations

Intercollegiate athletics at most Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) institutions have often been referred to as the "front porch" of the university (Longman, 2009). According to Toma (1999), marquee sports (i.e., football and basketball) have become the key point of reference to the university for many audiences, an outcome that the university has fostered through its use of college sports in campus life and external relations.

Most American universities, like intercollegiate athletics, are driven to increase revenue sources to assist in the growth and operation of its organization. Development efforts at universities continue to serve important roles when considering the advancement of the institutional missions. Many institutions that participate in Big-Time college sports see intercollegiate athletics as a platform to entertain alumni, donors, students, prospective students, foundations, and even state officials.

Duderstadt (2003) views intercollegiate athletics as a source of unity for "the extraordinary complex and diverse communities that make up the contemporary university" (p. 10). Duderstadt (2003) draws attention to the importance of intercollegiate athletics for the purpose of university development (e.g., fundraising), and the fact that most of the university's development events occur around football weekends. According to Duderstadt, "alumni reunions, visiting committees, major fund-raising events, cultivation of politicians, and other forms of university advancement activities all occurred on the Thursday through Saturday of

football weekends" (p. 26).

The magnitude of sporting events not only contributes an aura of importance on campus, but athletics events are the aspect of the university that is most visible to those outside of the academic community. Toma (1999) points out that high profile athletic programs contribute to the collegiate ideal and are used by many institutions to provide connections to their internal and external constituents. Stier (1994) asserts that accomplishments and achievements in sports can have a positive and lasting impact upon segments of the public and various constituencies. Past achievements can be utilized as a tool because such accomplishments make other more receptive to being in a 'help' mode. Everyone wants to be associated with a winner (Stier, 1994).

It has been argued that national publicity is the livelihood of institutional prestige, and this is what college sports can offer a university (Thelin, 1994). Although faculty may want to push toward reform of intercollegiate athletics, studies have found that presidents rated athletic success as important to institutional fundraising, emotional bonding of faculty and students, overall university reputation and rate of admissions applications (Billing, 2000) as well as entertainment function for donors and politicians. Thelin (1994) also supports this concept, noting that a university president can entertain and influence more people at the big game than at most other events on campus.

Several studies consistently found a positive, significant relationship between academic philanthropy and giving to support athletics (Sigelman & Bookheimer, 1983; McCormick & Tinsley, 1990). Several studies have examined the relationship between athletic success and charitable contributions to institutions of higher education. Grimes and Chressanthis (1994) uncovered that after controlling for the population of alumni, student enrollment, state appropriations, and per capita income, the results indicated that alumni contributions to

academics were positively related to the overall winning percentage of intercollegiate athletics programs. After conducting a study of undergraduate students at the University of Iowa, Lovaglia and Lucas (2005) concluded that high-visibility athletic programs can, in fact, enhance the stature of a university's graduates.

Goff (2000) found that athletic success translated into substantially increased exposure for the university, regardless of the academic reputation. Hart-Nibbrig (1993) also concluded that intercollegiate athletics promotes the name and identity of the university, which is especially true if the university does not have a nationally distinguished academic reputation. A 2014 study in the *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics* found that the success of intercollegiate athletics has been used as a powerful communication tool that increases good publicity and enhances the university profile, which could, in turn, result in favorable private giving (Koo & Dittmore, 2014).

2.1.2 The significance of the head football coach in Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Institutions

The landscape of college athletics has evolved from an extracurricular activity involving on-campus students to a multi-billion-dollar industry (Crowley, 2006). The big-business of intercollegiate athletics has been well documented by researchers (e.g., Greene, 2008; Karcher, 2009). The sport of football at most Football Bowl Subdivisions institutions generates more revenue than any other sport in college athletics (Thornton, 2010). Further, the head football coach at most Division I Football Bowl Subdivision institutions is generally the top income earner at the university and the most visible representative of the institution.

According to Zimbalist (2010), many head football coaches in the Division I football bowl subdivision earn five to ten times more than university presidents. "Coaches are CEOs with headsets, and just like real CEOs, they watch their pay climb" (Zimbalist, 2010). In 2014, the average salary of a football head coach at the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision level was $1.75 million, and at least thirty-four head coaches made more than $3 million per year (USA Today, 2014). A prominent university athletic director at a Big Ten institution points out that the hiring of a head coach for football can be the single most important decision a university Athletic Director makes during his/her tenure (Hollis, 2016).

2.2 MECHANISMS USED BY UNIVERSITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO HIRE PERSONNEL

Hiring is essential to an organization's success. Hiring decisions are among the most important aspects of an organization's future success and performance. Collins (2001) found that the first and requisite characteristic of becoming a great organization was hiring the right people for the right job. Successful employees have the capacity to add value that influences organizational performance (Delaney & Huselid, 1996). Good hiring decisions create a strong foundation for future performance and positive growth. Conversely, bad hiring decisions are costly and can reduce an organization's performance. B. D. Smith (1999) estimated from his study of fifty-four U.S. companies that the average managerial "mis-hire" costs a company twenty-four times the individual's base compensation. The author points to various aspects such as the mis-hire's compensation, cost of maintenance, initial hiring cost, costs associated with hiring and training a replacement, and missed business opportunities that resulted from having the wrong person.

Hiring should be more than "a gut feeling" (Deems, 1994). The literature explores the elements involved in personnel selection and the mechanisms associated with them.

2.2.1 The hiring process

In order to increase efficiency in hiring and to ensure consistency and compliance in the recruitment or selection of a candidate, many organizations engage in a formal or informal hiring process. According to Byham (1994), an efficient selection procedure should deliver the following advantages for an organization: (a) standardization, (b) efficient sequencing of the selection elements, (c) clear decision points, (d) full coverage of candidate's data that are relevant to all the elements of the position, (e) non-overlapping selection methods, (f) sufficient emphasis on candidate's background relevant to the job, (g) and non-overlapping exposure of applicants to the job and the organization.

A study by Development Dimension International (2002) revealed that organizations with the most effective hiring policies were more likely to use the following four practices:

- Job interviews in which candidates are asked to describe specific examples of their skills;
- Automated resume screening and search;
- Assessments that predict whether candidates are motivated by the factors associated with a particular job or a company's values and ways of doing things; and
- Simulations that gauge specific job related abilities and skills.

Roselius and Kleiner (2000) outline key steps to the hiring process and point out eight steps that a manager should take in selecting a new employee. These steps include:

1. Determining the necessary skills, education, and traits of successful candidates;

2. Pre-interview and preliminary reference checking;
3. Developing performance-based questions for interviews;
4. Interviewing the candidates;
5. Reference checking and testing;
6. Additional interviewing;
7. Making a decision; and
8. Notifying the candidate.

Rees (1998) describes thirteen steps of an equitable search process involving college personnel and faculty: 1) Identify the unit's needs, goals, and hence personnel gaps; 2) Create a representative committee; 3) Determine the criteria for the position; 4) Draft and place the advertisement; 5) Review and assess materials from candidates; 6) Create a short list; 7) Determine the interview questions; 8) Plan the site visit; 9) Conduct the interviews; 10) Assess the files, post-interview; 11) Select a candidate for the position; 12) Document the process; and 13) Orient the incumbent to the unit.

Alley and Floyd (2006) break down the hiring process for athletics administrators into seven steps: Step 1) Search committee selection. This section provides recommendations on the search committee make-up, a checklist of tasks to be done, and timeline considerations. Step 2) The job description. This section states that a good job description should include the following: Skills, abilities, education, experience, reporting relationship, and program priorities. Step 3) The job posting. This section provides job posting possibilities. Step 4) The candidate pool. This section states that criteria for the position should be set in writing and agreed upon before the start of the search process. All applications should be initially screened by the leadership and search committee chair for minimal advertised qualifications (for example, education and

experience). Step 5) The interview. This section discusses the importance of using the interview to determine institutional fit and to clarify any questions that arise from the application and cover letter. This section advises not to use absolute "scores" as an evaluation tool; instead encourages the search committee members to write out their personal judgments of each candidate. This section also addresses the importance of determining what type of interview that will be used (e.g., phone, interactive video, campus interview, return interview). Lastly, step 5 briefly discusses points to consider when interviewing the candidate and the final cut. Step 6) Review and selection. This section recommends that leadership should establish guidelines about review of applicants, and the importance of reference checks for all short-list candidates. Step 7) Notification and documentation. This section discusses the aspects of making an offer and documenting the hiring process.

Dipboye (1992) suggests that there are three phases for a candidate to pass through prior to the final hiring decision. First is a pre-interview phase when the candidate's resume is reviewed and other ancillary information about the candidate is compared to the job requirements. Second, there is the interview phase where the candidate may meet with one or several representatives (or agents) of the organization or company. The final phase of the post interview phase is when the interviewer reviews the findings of the interview(s) and evaluates the candidate. During the final phase, the agent or hiring representative(s) uses the knowledge gained in the interviews to compare the candidate's knowledge, skill and abilities to those required for the job. After the hiring representative makes his/her decision, the candidate may be hired.

2.2.2 Job description

Job descriptions or profiles are the foundation of the hiring process and function as the backbone for personnel selection. A job description is a profile of the job, its essential functions, reporting relationships, hours, and required credentials. A results-oriented job description can shape the beginning of the employee relationship and can help everyone understand the mission, culture, needs, and goals of the organization (Harvard Business School, 2002). Data and information from a job analysis provide the essential information to develop a job description (Robertson & Smith, 2001).

Min & Kleiner (2001) reveal the need for a clear job description that defines the overall purpose or role of the job and the main tasks to be carried out. A good job description is vital to the success of a selection procedure because it is the foundation upon which all other processes are based. Researchers contend that a job description should precede other steps involved in the personnel selection process and should be built on the results of the job analysis, including its definition of tasks, activities, and responsibilities (Berry & Houston, 1993).

Wendover (2002) points out that a job description can be used in a variety of ways. For the purposes of hiring, the job description assists in explaining the job to the applicants and serves as a basis for writing job postings and developing a list of criteria for a successful candidate to meet. The author asserts that after the person has been hired, the job description gives the new employee a direction and basis from which to start and serves as a tool in the measurement of performance. Previous research has shown that interviewers need to be aware of the job requirements in order to make valid selection decisions (Barclay, 2001 Rosse & Levin, 2007).

2.2.3 Search firms/consultants

Search consultants are often used by organizations to carry out recruitment or to attract candidates who want to work in a particular job. Frequently, the firms may also be charged with narrowing down a short list of candidates into a suitable number for the selection process (Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2013). Fernandez-Araoz (1999) asserts that executive search firms are often better than in-house staff at conducting the fast and confidential searches typically required for high-level situations. Further, the author cites other instances when search firms are not needed: (a) when the candidate pool is small and known to management, (b) when the requirements of the open position and the competencies of the successful candidate are clear, (c) when the position seeking to be filled is highly technical and demands very specialized knowledge and expertise, and (d) when it is a low-level position.

Atwell (2009) believes that the best search firms are good at structuring the search process efficiently and enabling the interest groups that serve on the search committee to work together by preparing and selling a job description that produces consensus. Atwell (2009) provides seven points to consider before retaining a search consultant:

1. Identify no more than three or four firms to be interviewed, selected via references from other institutions that have engaged them and speak well of their work. A long list of clients does not necessarily make a firm the best for a particular search.
2. Ask the firm how they plan to identify and recruit candidates and how they carry out due-diligence responsibilities.
3. Ask them for a past and current client list, the latter in order to ensure that they are not engaged in any competing searches.
4. Specify how they will work with the internal search committee.

5. Find out who the principal consultant will be, as well as how many (and which) other engagements that person will be handling; get his or her full resume.
6. Look at the firm's fee structure and determine how it should be modified based on the role of the consultant.
7. If the firm is going to be involved in negotiating the employment agreement and compensation, include those responsibilities in the contract, since some search firms do not have employees qualified for such work (p. 46-47).

Two architects in the field of personnel selection, Meyer and Herman (2004) asked the question, "Does the level of the position warrant the expense of a search firm?" Meyer and Herman (2004) suggest that, generally, any senior level administrator whose position is highly visible and critical to the institution's mission is worth employing a search firm to locate. Using a search firm in conjunction with a search committee can improve the chances for a superior outcome in a short period of time. The search firm can take care of the legwork for the search committee by reducing the workload and serving as a facilitator throughout the entire process. Meyer and Herman (2004) note that the role of the search firm should be to advise and guide, not to dictate and decide.

McLaughlin and Riesman (1990) point out that search consultants are helpful in providing a realistic sense of who is "out there" to be discovered, scrutinized, courted, and persuaded. The authors also note that once the committee has been created, the consultant can help the search committee or leadership establish procedures for the search process and outline reasonable timetables for their completion. Kelderman (2015) asserts that search firms are most often hired to professionalize the search process and, in many cases, to make sure the process and the candidates are confidential; most high-quality candidates in high profile positions will

not join an open search because it may alienate them in their current job and/or organization. One university vice president and athletic director at a prestigious Division I institution realized the importance of search firms when conducting a major head coaching search and noted that "having a partner to provide outside counsel can eliminate bias, maximize the efficiency and confidentiality of the process, and ultimately help guide us to the most informed decision possible" (Dohrmann, 2013).

The employment of search firms has become increasingly popular in the hiring process for head coaches (Doyel, 2006). Search firms tend to be very expensive, as the process is labor intensive and relies on the recruitment consultant building up networks of potential employees even when no active searching is being done. In 2014, the executive search firm Korn/Ferry International billed the University of Texas at Austin $250,000 for helping hire their head football coach. Colorado State University paid about $320,000 to search firm Spencer Stuart for its football coach search in 2011. Another popular search firm in college athletics, Parker Executive Search, often has charged institutions around $75,000 to $90,000 for its services (Schrotenboer, 2014).

Two very important aspects about search firms are their confidentiality and an increased level of confidence that the candidates are aptly suited for the position. The firms' reputation would significantly decrease if they recommended an unsuitable candidate, so they are normally unwilling to recommend a candidate that they do not have full confidence in, even if it would give them immediate compensation (Nazmi, 2006). Search firms do thorough research and dig deep into the professional and personal lives of candidates to ensure that the person they recommend is high quality and has much experience. In addition, search firms offer candidates

insights into the organization and the current job market in order to give the prospect a sense of the job he/she would be preforming (Nazmi, 2006).

2.2.4 Interviews

Interview styles and hiring methods differ greatly depending upon the industry, company, and position. The employment interview is the most commonly used personnel selection tool (Barclay, 2001; Kumra & Beech, 1994). Face-to-face interviews continue to be one of the most common recruitment and selection methods. The interview is a two-way interaction between the interviewer and the applicant, and organizations need to be aware of the impressions they create during the interview process (Dipboye, Macan, & Shahani-Denning, 2012).

The main purpose of an interview is the same as other hiring methods: to gather information about a job applicant in order to measure his or her fit with the position and predict future performance (Schmidt & Rader, 1999; Posthuma, Morgeson, & Campion, 2002). Interviewing seems to be used in the hiring process because "it is a flexible, personal, two-way process which is often used for social processes which go beyond mere selection information gathering, and in addition it is expected" (Barclay, 2001, p. 136). Rosse and Levin (2007) assert that interviews are the best way to assess "chemistry" or "fit" between the applicant and the organization.

Structured and unstructured interviews are the most common types of selection interviews (Adams, 1999). Generally, structured interviews measure knowledge and focus on past behaviors to predict future performance (Camp, Vielhaber, & Simonetti, 2001), whereas unstructured interviews assess a candidate's social skills and personality attributes (Adams, 1999). The structured interview is intended to make the interview a comprehensive, scientific

process and improve its validity. According to Anderson and Shackleton (1993), the structured interview standardizes the interactions across interviews with the same questions asked of each candidate. Many studies have assessed the validity of different types of interviews. Several meta-analyses of these studies have shown that structured interviews have more predictive validity than unstructured interviews (Huffcutt & Arthur, 1994; McDaniel, Hartman, Whetzel, & Grubb, 2007; Wright et al., 1989). Barclay (2001) found that the use of structured interview techniques is rapidly increasing and provides an accessible way for many organizations to improve their selection decisions. Schmidt and Zimmerman (2004) also found that the standardization of questions and scoring guidelines increases reliability, and therefore the validity, of structured interviews. Other studies of employment interviews have concluded that structured interviews offer greater predictive validity and appear to be the most used technique (Judge, Higgins, & Cable, 2000; McDaniel et al., 2007; Weekly and Ployhart, 2006).

On the other hand, some studies have shown the benefit of unstructured interviews. Blackman (2002) found that unstructured interviews could better predict work-related personality characteristics. Another study pointed out that unstructured interviews allow employers to gain additional knowledge about the candidate through candid and fluid discussion that can reveal much about the personality of the candidate, and whether he or she fits with the organization (Ickes et al., 1997).

Structured interviews are seen as particularly effective when they are conducted as a behavioral interview (e.g., asking how, in the past, the candidate displayed leadership skills or showed initiative or persuasiveness) rather than as a situational interview (e.g., how the candidate says he or she would respond in a certain hypothetical situation) (Barclay, 2001). By contrast, when interviews are unstructured, it is difficult to assess the responses given by

candidates in any systematic manner. The process becomes highly subjective, and it is this subjectivity that reduces the validity of the process (Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2013).

The questions selected and how they are formed is an extremely important element of any interview. Wendover (2002) points out that the questions asked in an interview fall into five categories: (1) career goals/occupational objectives, (2) educational background, (3) work experience, (4) general skills and aptitudes related to job criteria, and 5) attitudes and personality characteristics. Further, Arthur (2001) discusses the importance of identifying job-specific competencies when recruiting candidates and suggests that there are four primary categories: (1) measurable, tangible, or technical skills; (2) knowledge; 3) behavior; and 4) interpersonal skills. Competency-based questions seek examples and allow the employer to project how a candidate is likely to perform in an organization (e.g., Describe a time in which you were called upon to lead a project. What was the end result?).

Competency-based questions draw from applicants' past experiences and behaviors, relating them to specific requirements, responsibilities, or parameters of a given job-related situation. Competency-based interviews allow employers to make decisions based on facts. These types of interview questions are structured, job-specific, and focused on relevant concrete and intangible competencies (Arthur, 2001). Competencies are skills, traits, qualities, or characteristics that contribute to a person's ability to perform effectively the duties and responsibilities of the job. According to Smart and Street, "competencies define how you expect a new hire to operate in the fulfillment of the job and the achievement of the outcomes" (Smart & Street, 2008, p. 29).

Wood and Payne (1998) pinpointed the backward-looking competency-based interview as the most efficient and reliable predictor of future success of a candidate in a particular job.

The authors assert that the backward-looking competency-based interview lends itself extremely well to assessing a person against a competency framework. The basic premise of the behavior-based interview (or backward-looking interview) is that past behaviors predict future behaviors (Bowers & Kleiner, 2005). According to Deems (1994, "the best single predictor of a candidate's future job performance is his or her past job behavior" (p. 19). The hiring decision should be based on fact and not on intuition. Intuition usually leads to hiring people who remind the interviewer of themselves rather than the most capable person for the job (Roselius & Kleiner, 2000).

Based on four thousand studies and meta-analyses examined by Smart and Street (2008), the best and surest way to find "A Players" is through a series of four interviews that build on each other: (1) the screening interview, (2) the top-grading interview, (3) the focused interview, and (4) the reference interview. According to Smart and Street (2008), the screening interview is a short, phone-based interview designed to screen out "B and C Players" from the roster of candidates. The top-grading interview is a chronological walk-through of a person's career. The interviewer begins by asking about the highs and lows of a person's educational experience to gain insight into his or her background. Then the interviewer asks five simple questions, for each job in the past fifteen years, beginning with the earliest and working his or her way forward to the present day (See Appendix B – Topgrading Interview Guide).

According to *Hiring and Keeping the Best People* by the Harvard Business School (2002), case interviewing "is a method that subjects a job applicant to a scenario and business problem similar to those encountered on the job. The candidate is expected to respond with one or more well-reasoned solutions to the problem" (p. 40-41). According to a hiring manager at a Fortune 500 company, "case interviewing enables the interviewer to see first-hand how a

candidate tackles a strategic question and communicates possible solutions".

According to Raffoni (1999), the power of case interviewing is threefold:

1. It gets as close to real-life situations as possible. It is a chance to see someone's mind work with little or no preparation. This allows you to evaluate interviewees who have well-polished answers to conventional questions such as, "Where do you want to be in five years?"
2. It helps candidates gain a better understanding of the job. I have had many candidates end a case and say, "I was a little unclear about the job before the interview, this gave me a better sense of what's involved."
3. It tests a variety of skills. Case interviewing can test competencies such as strategic thinking, analytical ability, and judgment, along with a variety of communication skills including active listening, questioning, and dealing with confrontation. Particularly for positions where there is no "right" background or "typical" candidate – that is, no requirement for specific degrees or experience – case interviewing allows you to put everyone on the same footing.

Coy and Masterson (2007) point out that during the interview process, hiring managers should focus more on forcing candidates to present examples of how they have handled a certain situation, rather than bragging about how they would handle the same situation if it arose in the future.

One particular author discussed the need for the interview strategy. Ball (2000) asserts that the candidate should demonstrate (a) the best skills and abilities to complete the job successfully; (b) passion for the job, including energy to perform at the necessary level; and (c) the highest probability of fitting in with the people within the organization. Ball (2000) also

mentions that great interviews include forging partnerships and focusing on softer issues of concern:

- Showing the candidate respect is critical to the organization's success
- Developing rapport needs to occur throughout the relationship
- Creating a stimulating and enjoyable interview by making it interactive is important
- Enabling each of you to accomplish your goals through an interactive interview is critical
- Selling effectively so that when the candidate joins the organization he/she is excited to be your partner

2.2.5 Search committees

Search committees are often a mechanism that universities and other organizations use to facilitate the generation of qualified candidates and to assess job applicants in a manner that is consistent and fair. Hotchel and Wilson (2007) suggest that "when putting together a search committee, the hiring authority should consider which constituent groups need to be represented, the size of the committee, who should serve as the chairperson, and who should represent the various groups" (p. 7). J. D. Rothwell (2004) recommends using the smallest number of people capable of getting the job done effectively. When in doubt, Rothwell suggests 7 to 10 members for a search committee. Many factors are considered in regards to the search committee size. A small committee may be easier to assemble and work efficiently; however, the value of a committee representing various constituencies must not be minimized (Neff & Leondar, 1992). When considering university presidential search committees, Neff and Leondar (1992) suggest that a committee of nine to fifteen works best. Large committees (e.g., over 15 members) take

longer to organize, meetings last longer, and maintaining confidentiality can be a problem (Neff & Leondar, 1992).

When selecting a chair for the search committee, Hochel and Wilson (2007) suggest selecting someone who (a) is respected and trusted on campus; (b) is a competent communicator (e.g., runs meetings efficiently, moves discussion at an appropriate pace, and allows more talk when needed; deals with awkward situations skillfully; communicates with people from different cultures successfully; handles difficult group members effectively); (c) has excellent organizational skills; (d) works well with the administration and the human resource office; (e) has institutional knowledge to provide the committee with needed information and history; and (f) has time to devote to running the search (p. 9).

2.2.6 Background and reference checks

To verify credentials and uncover desired information regarding a candidate's work, criminal history, and personal history, many employers conduct background checks as a regular step in their hiring process. In addition to ensuring job qualifications, conducting background checks can help employers protect themselves and the public from individuals who pose an unreasonable risk of harm and may shield employers from potential negligent hiring lawsuits (Dworkin, Squire, & Petullo, 2013). While background checks may be in the best interest of employers, in conducting such checks, employers must be cognizant of state and federal laws regulating the procurement and use of information regarding an applicant for the purpose of making hiring decisions.

Some evidence suggests that job candidates engage in extensive misrepresentation of academic and work credentials listed on resumes and job applications (Levashina & Campion,

2009). For example, in its 2007 Hiring Index study, ADP Screening and Selection Services (2007) reported that 41 percent of individuals' resumes showed discrepancies in employment, credentials, or education history (ADP Screening and Selection Services, 2007).

References should be contacted to confirm that the applicant actually worked at previous jobs during the time periods stated on the job application and in the positions indicated and to inquire about the candidate's work ethic, reliability, integrity, or other work-related attributes or job performance capabilities (Andler & Herbst, 2003). Official records should always be checked. Depending on the job, some of the following information should be verified: social security number (identity verification), eligibility for employment for non-residents, educational data and histories (e.g., degree verifications), employment verification, license verifications, driving records (e.g., citations, accidents, and suspensions), credit information, military service, and criminal records (Matejkovic & Matejkovic, 2006; Edwards & Kleiner, 2002). In addition, conducting reference checks can give an employer valuable insight into an applicant's abilities, and may help to shield the employer from possible claims of negligent hiring (Schloss & Lahr, 2008).

Literature suggests that background checks must always be conducted. However, there is no single standard for how thorough background checks must be. The thoroughness of a background check may depend on a combination of public policy and the nature of the job (Walsh, 2007). Levashina and Campion (2009) suggest that organizations should be aware of the issue of negligent hiring and their responsibility to perform appropriate background checks. Background checks should be based on knowledge of job requirements obtained through a job analysis or other means and identified risks associated with performing the required job tasks.

The failure by employers to adequately complete reference checks or background checks

has caused considerable embarrassment and negative press. George O'Leary was hired as the head football coach at the University of Notre Dame in December, 2001. O'Leary had been the head coach at Georgia Tech University prior to being appointed to his new position. However, several days after his appointment, it was found that O'Leary made untrue statements on his resume. Five days after his appointment, he resigned. O'Leary admitted the inaccuracies first about his playing career and then about his master's degree (Fountain & Wong, 2001). Another incident several years ago involved Yale football coach Tom Williams. Yale accepted Williams' resignation after he lied on his resume. Williams disclosed on his resume that he applied for a Rhodes Scholarship while at Stanford when he actually had not. Williams also said he played on the NFL San Francisco 49ers practice squad when he actually just attended "a try-out camp" for a few days (Manfred, 2011).

2.3 RELEVANT THEORIES – PERSONNEL SELECTION

2.3.1 Person-environment fit theory

There are numerous theories and models associated with personnel selection. The general goal of personnel selection is to find the person whose personality, abilities, skills, motivations, and interests best fit those of the organization. This section of the paper will explore personnel selection and review the relevant literature on person-environment fit theory, an overarching concept of person-organization fit and person-job fit. Then, literature on person-organization fit and person-job fit will be examined more narrowly.

Person-environment fit is defined as the degree of congruence or match between a person

and the environment (Pervin, 1968; Holland, 1997). The theory proposes that compatibility between a person and their work environment results in job satisfaction. Person-environment theory also suggests that a match between a person's personality, abilities, needs, and interests and those required or provided by a particular job will lead to improved job performance (Muchinsky, 1987).

There have been differing viewpoints about the importance of the person versus the situation (i.e., environment). One group of researchers believes that the situation is primarily responsible for individuals' behaviors (Davis-Blake & Pfeffer, 1989), while another group of researchers argued that personal characteristics are primarily responsible for behavior (House, Shane, & Herold, 1996). Person-environment fit has been conceptualized as a complex and multidimensional concept; therefore, several different dimensions to conceptualize person-environment fit have evolved.

First, person-environment fit can be conceptualized as supplementary and complementary. Supplementary fit occurs when a person supplements or possesses characteristics that are similar to other individuals in an environment. People perceive themselves as fitting in because they are alike or similar to other people possessing these characteristics (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). Complementary fit occurs when a person's characteristics make the environment whole or add what is missing. With complementary person-environment fit, the foundation of a good fit is the mutually offsetting pattern of relevant characteristics between the person and the environment (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987).

Second, complementary person-environment fit involves needs-supplies and demand-abilities perspective. From this dimension, an environment supplies resources as well as task related, interpersonal and growth opportunities that are demanded by individuals. When

resources (e.g., financial, psychological) from the environment meet the individual's needs, needs-supplies fit is completed. On the contrary, an environment may demand contributions from individuals in terms of abilities, knowledge, skills, and effort. Demand-abilities fit is achieved when the individual's contribution meets environmental demands. In summary, needs-supplies fit occurs when an environment satisfies individuals' desires, needs, or preferences. Demand-abilities fit occurs when an individual has the abilities required to meet environmental demands (Kristof, 1996). Finally, person-environment fit can be conceptualized as perceived (i.e., subjective) fit and actual (i.e., objective) fit. Perceived fit is viewed as the judgment that a person fits well in the environment, while actual fit is the comparison between separately rated individual and environmental characteristics (Kristof, 1996).

One theory of person-environment fit that has generated a great deal of research is Holland's career theory. Low and Rounds (2005) discuss the four primary points central to the theory. First, interests can be used to categorize individuals into six types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional. For example, enterprising types like work that involves assertive, persuasive, and leadership-oriented activities, while investigative types like work that involves creative, expressive, and unconventional activities. The second key point of Holland's theory is that work activities and environments can be described according to the above six types. Individuals and their work environment can be aligned to the same interest space. The authors assert that this creates potential for establishing a natural link between an individual's interest and the substantive nature of the work performed in a given job.

Third, Holland's theory proposed that individuals search for work environments that enable them to express their interests and to associate with people who hold similar interests. The final point of this theory is the compatibility between employee's interests and the extent to

which the environment supports those interests can influence the employee's work behavior. Holland believed that people whose interests are matched with a given work environment will a) be more likely to enter the work environment; b) be more satisfied in that work environment; c) perform better in that work environment; and d) choose to stay in that work environment longer than people whose interests are not congruent with that environment (Low & Rounds, 2005; Holland, 1985). Holland's theory has been evaluated through empirical research and has been accepted by practitioners (Brown, Brooks, & Associates, 1990). Hogan (1991) suggested that Holland's theory can be an efficient way to measure person-environment fit.

2.3.2 Theoretical model of person-organization fit

One of the most examined theories involving personnel selection is person-organization fit. If a person fits into the organization, the individual and the organization are more effective. Person-organization fit is broadly defined as the compatibility between people and entire organizations (Kristof, 1996; O'Reilly et al, 1991). Person-organization fit has also been defined more specifically as the "congruence between the norms and values of organizations and the values of persons" (Chatman, 1989, p. 339).

The literature surrounding the field of person-organization fit has two traditions of research within the broad research context. One is built around the concept of supplementary fit, which is represented as the relationship between the fundamental characteristics of the organization, such as culture, climate, values, goals, personality, and attitudes. The second tradition is labeled as complementary fit, which includes the degree to which the organization and the individual have needs that are supplied by the other party (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987; Kristof, 1996; Cable & Edwards, 2004).

Kristof (1996) maintains that person-organization fit is more useful to an understanding of work behavior than more general models of person-organization fit. The author views person-organization fit as the congruence between a person and an organization that is based on one entity providing a need of the other, the two entities sharing special characteristics, or both. Drawing from this perspective, Kristof (1996) highlights four operationalizations of person-organization fit. The first operational definition of person-organization fit focuses on the similarity between the person's values and the values held by the organization. A second category of fit that Kristof mentions is illustrated in Schneider's (1987) Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) model. It represents a similarity of the goals of the person with the goals of the organization. The third type of fit, a complementary approach, is less general than the first two and refers to the fit between the person's preferences or needs and the organization's system and structure (i.e., reward system). The final type of fit Kristof details is the similarity between the person's personality and the organization's environment.

The foundation of person-organization fit can be traced back to Schneider's (1987) Attraction Selection Attrition (ASA) framework. Schneider contends that individuals are not randomly assigned to situations, but instead seek out situations that are attractive to them. Individuals will be selected to be a part of that situation, and by remaining in that situation, help to determine the situation. Schneider argues that organizations are one situation that people are attracted to, selected to be a part of, and remain with if they are a good fit with the organization.

Person-organization fit has been linked to job choice, selection decisions, job satisfaction, performance, organization commitment, turnover, and psychological well-being (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Vancouver and Schmitt (1991) uncovered many significant relationships between person-organization fit and important organizational and individual outcomes such as a positive

relationship with job satisfaction. Cable and Edwards (2004) extend this further and investigated the combined effects of supplementary and complementary fit on outcomes such as job satisfaction and organizational identification. The authors found that supplemental fit, operationalized as value congruence, and complementary fit, operationalized as psychological needs fulfillment, contributed independently to job satisfaction and organizational identification. Because values, beliefs, and expected norms of behavior drive person-organization fit, researchers commonly associate person-organization fit with organizational culture and the roles that culture plays in shaping the behavior of individuals within the organization (Wheeler, Buckley, Halbesleben, Brouer, & Ferris, 2005). Research conducted by the selection process suggests that organizations base hiring decisions on the perceived compatibility between the organization's values, beliefs, and norms and the prospective employees' values, beliefs, and norms (Werbel & Gilliland, 1999).

Powell (1998) defines "fit" slightly different than most of the literature. The first definition involves compatibility: hiring employees, whose values and goals match those of the organization, thereby strengthening and reinforcing the organization's existing culture and increasing cohesion. The second definition involves diversity: hiring employees who are different from the organization in order to extend the fit and provide diversity. Nahvandi and Malekzadeh (1999) assert that each approach has advantages and disadvantages, leading to the conclusion that organizations must combine them to be effective.

Rynes and Cable (2003) note that serious job applicants are likely to demonstrate as much concern about choosing the most appropriate organization for them to work for as much as the most appropriate job for them to perform. Schneider (1987) advances the previous authors' point and suggests that work values are a core means by which individuals judge their person-

organization fit, and individuals are attracted to and seek employment with organizations that exhibit characteristics similar to their own. Organizations in turn tend to select individuals who are most similar to the organization.

Research on this topic also suggests that applicant perceptions of fit with regard to values, needs, and preferences are related to organizational attraction (Judge & Cable, 1997). Uggerslev, Fassina, & Kraichy (2012) found that "fit" is an important driver of organizational attraction at all stages of the recruitment process. The role in which person-organization fit plays during the hiring process is important not only because it relates to attraction, but also performance-related outcomes once the candidate is hired. Research also suggests that person-organization fit is an important predictor of early stage recruiting outcomes such as organizational attraction (Kristof-Brown, 2005; Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005).

Person-organization fit is related to an array of factors including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover (Arthur, 2006; Chapman & Mayers, 2013). Chan (1996) found that employee performance was highest when the problem-solving demands of an organization's environment matched the cognitive style of problem solving of the organizational members.

In light of the person-organization fit, researchers have suggested that organizations proactively hire employees based on their fit with organizations' cultures. Researchers also point out that person-job fit is important in employee selection practices (Bowen, Ledford, & Nathan, 1991). Bowen et al. (1991) suggests that selecting people whose personalities are compatible with the organization's culture creates a flexible workforce with employees who can be moved easily between jobs. The author recommended a four-step procedure that would help incorporate person-organization fit at each step in the selection process. The adoption of this system was

predicted to improve employee attitudes and reduce absenteeism and turnover. Chatman's (1989) study found that recruits whose values match the organization adjust more quickly to the culture than those whose values or beliefs do not.

The employment interview is one hiring tool that is critical to establishing person-organization fit. The interview enables organizations and job applicants to interact through organizational representatives, presumably allowing each party to determine the degree to which the other demonstrates congruent values and interests (Judge & Ferris, 1992). Rynes and Gerhart (1990) suggest that person-organization fit is most commonly assessed with the employment interview. Organizational interviewers readily declare the goal of locating and hiring applicants who "fit." Karren and Graves (1994) found that the structured interview is one of the most effective ways to assess a candidate's fit within an organization.

2.3.3 Theoretical model of person-job fit

Recruiters make hiring decisions based on their perceptions of the degree to which applicants fit jobs (Kristof-Brown, 2000). Person-job fit is broadly defined as the compatibility between a person's characteristics and those of the job or tasks that are performed at work (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Edwards (1991) defines person-job fit as the congruence between an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities and the knowledge, skills, and abilities required by the job, or the wishes of the individual and the attributes of the job.

Person-job fit can be examined from two different perspectives. First, from the demands perspective, fit exists when the individual has the abilities to meet the demands of the job, or the person possesses the knowledge, skills, and abilities demanded by the job (Edwards, 1991). Kristof (1996) describes this type of fit as the fit between the abilities of the person and the

demands or requirements for the job. The second perspective, needs-supplies, is the fit that exists because the job meets or supplies the needs, desires, or interests of an individual (Edwards, 1991). Kristof (1996) describes this type of fit as needs-supplies match where the desires of the employee match the attributes of the job.

The concept of person-job fit is the foundation for employee selection (Werbel & Gilliland, 1999). Person-job fit research has been explored by researchers for many years and began with the work of Parsons (1909) and Williamson (1939). Primarily, the studies on person-job fit have centered on the fit between employee desires and job requirements (Hambleton, Kalliath, & Taylor, 2000).

Achieving person-job fit has several positive outcomes for the candidate and the employer. Edwards (1991) identifies attendance, job satisfaction, low job stress, motivation, performance, and retention as outcomes that are positively associated with person-job fit. Other studies have shown that person-job fit is associated with job performance (Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990), job satisfaction (Arvey, Carter, & Buerkley, 1991) and career success (Bretz & Judge, 1994). Research conducted by Saks and Ashford (1997) assessed perceived "fit" of new hires and found the person-job fit was positively related to the overall job satisfaction and commitment to the organization. Tziner and Meir (1997) suggest that strong, effective commitment emerges when there is a match between the individual's values, goals, and expectations and those of the organization.

Fit can be assessed subjectively or objectively (Ehrhart, 2006). Subjective person-job fit refers to the perceptions of individuals in regards to how well they fit with a particular job. On the other hand, objective person-job fit pertains to how well individuals' reported preferences or characteristics correspond to external judgments of the job's characteristics. The author found

that subjective perceptions of fit are assessed, with the concept that individuals' own evaluations of fit are related to outcomes such as job attraction, regardless of the objective fit between the person and the job.

Chuang and Sackett (2005) investigate the importance of person-job fit and person-organization fit between and within interview stages. The researchers found that person-job fit was perceived as more important than person-organization fit in the initial interview but that the importance of person-job fit becomes lower from the initial interview to the final interview before a final selection decision. A study in 2007 revealed that person-organization fit was strongly related to job choice decisions and job offer acceptance for highly conscientious individuals (Resick, Baltes, & Shantz, 2007).

2.4 UNIQUE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH HIRING HEAD FOOTBALL COACHES

2.4.1 Legal considerations in personnel selection

Organizations and employers can avoid legal liability of employment discrimination if the laws that regulate hiring practices are followed. Being aware and informed of the applicable employment laws can certainly help organizations avoid future litigation and can aid hiring managers by following a compliant hiring procedure. Many laws are in place to protect individuals from discrimination and to provide equal employment opportunities. This section of the literature review will provide a brief overview of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and an overview of the five federal EEOC statutes that have a significant

impact on hiring practices.

Established in 1965, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) interprets and enforces federal statutes regarding employment discrimination. The EEOC is "responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, or genetic information" (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2015). The EEOC's primary document is the Uniform Guidelines in Employee Selection Procedures. The EEOC has the authority to investigate charges of discrimination against employers who are covered by the law.

2.4.1.1 Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964) protects individuals against employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. Title VII was the first federal statute to protect against discrimination in employment, and it continues to have a significant impact on hiring practices today. Title VII covers federal, state, and local governments, educational institutions, and private employers that have fifteen (15) or more employees.

According to Klinvex, O'Connell, and Klinvex (1999), the following topics related to race, color, national origin, gender, or religion should not be asked about or used as criteria in the hiring process: race, color, ethnicity, birthplace, candidate's native tongue, whether candidate is a citizen of another country, linguistic characteristics, physical characteristics, gender, marital status, number of children, occupation of spouse or other relatives, healthcare coverage through spouse, sexual preference, religious affiliation, religious holidays observed, and religious activities/practices. Weiss (2004) suggests keeping interview questions job-related and ask them

for every candidate. The author also discusses the importance of treating all the candidates equally throughout the hiring process. Title VII seeks to create an environment in which employers treat all applicants and employees equally.

2.4.1.2 Age discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA)

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act protects individuals who are 40 years of age or older from any condition of employment based on age. The ADEA applies to employers with 20 or more employees, including federal, state, and local governments, employment agencies, and labor organizations. The law makes it unlawful to include age preferences or limitations on job descriptions or advertisements. The following topics related to age should not be asked about or used as criteria in the hiring process: candidate's age, date of birth, number or ages of children/grandchildren, and social security benefits (Klinvex et al., 1999).

2.4.1.3 Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1990 (IRCA)

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1990 is applicable to all employers in the United States and prohibits discrimination based on national origin or citizenship. Under this federal statute, the employer must obtain verification of a candidate's right to work in the United States. If an employer imposes U.S. citizenship requirements or provides preference to U.S. citizens in hiring or employment, the organization may be in violation of IRCA, unless there is some legal requirement for a particular job.

2.4.1.4 Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against a qualified individual with a disability. To comply with the ADA, employers are required to keep all materials related to the hiring process for one year from the date of action. The federal statute covers physical or mental impairments that substantially limit major life activities. Physical impairments may include physiological disorders, cosmetic disfigurement, or an anatomical loss. Mental impairments include mental or psychological disorders such as mental retardation, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. Major life activities may include the functions of breathing, caring for oneself, seeing, hearing, speaking, performing manual tasks, walking, learning, and working.

According to Klinvex et al. (1999),

> a qualified individual with a disability is one who, with or without reasonable accommodation, has the skills, experience, education, and other requirements of the job and can perform the essential functions of the job without endangering his or her health and safety or that of others. (p. 25)

The authors assert that the following topics related to disabilities should not be asked about or used as criteria in the hiring process: existence of a disability, cause of disability, present or future treatment by a doctor, treatment for alcohol or drug abuse, current state of mental or physical health, and exercise or nutrition habits.

2.4.1.5 The Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA)

The Equal Pay Act makes it illegal to pay different wages to men and women if they perform

equal work in the same workplace. The law also makes it illegal to punish a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a chart of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit. It is job content, not job titles that determines whether jobs are substantially equal.

For example, the salary of men and women coaches should be reasonably comparable due to the Equal Pay Act of 1963. However, a significant difference emerges when third party money is used for items in contracts described as supplemental, speaking fees, or appearance fees. Those funds can come from athletic department endorsement contracts with apparel or shoe companies or similar arrangements, and they are not subject to the same regulations as the base salary (Gentry & Alexander, 2012).

2.4.1.6 Affirmative Action

The United States Department of Labor's Employment Standards Administration's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) enforces the Executive Order #11246. These laws ban discrimination and require federal contractors and subcontractors or agents to take affirmative action to ensure that all individuals have an equal opportunity for employment, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or status as Vietnam era or special disabled veteran. The OFCCP requires a contractor to engage in self-analysis for discovering any barriers to equal employment opportunity. American Indians or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, and Hispanic individuals are considered minorities for the purposes of the Executive Order.

Non-construction (i.e., service and supply) contractors with 50 or more employees and government contacts of $50,000 or more are required to develop and implement a written

affirmative action plan (AAP) for each establishment. The regulations define an AAP as a set of specific and result-oriented procedures to which a contractor commits itself to apply every good faith effort. The contractors establish goals to reduce or overcome under-utilization. Good faith efforts may include expanded efforts in outreach, recruitment, training, and other activities to increase the pool of qualified minorities and females. The actual selection decision is to be made on a non-discriminatory basis (United States Department of Labor, 2016).

Affirmative action programs have been established to aid in corrective actions to prevent discrimination in hiring practices. The intent of affirmative action is to provide equal employment opportunity to individuals regardless of one's race, sex, ethnicity, or national origin in regards to the recruitment, selection, employee benefits, promotions, and hiring practices. Blanks (2005) asserts that there are many negative opinions of affirmative action programs or requirements, forming misconceptions about preferential treatment provided to minorities.

2.4.1.7 Title IX

In 1972, the United States Congress adopted legislation that caused changes to take place at academic institutions across the United States. Title IX was part of the amendments of the Higher Education Act, which mandated that schools that receive federal funds are required to provide equal treatment to the sexes. Title IX states that "no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance" (Office for Civil Rights, 1979. Title IX guarantees women legal protection from discrimination within educational institutions. Educational institutions were initially not aware that the bill would cover athletics and open up opportunities for women in sports (Sandler, 2002).

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (DHEW) provided policy interpretations that clarified the law. The DHEW clarified the meaning of "equal opportunity" in the context of intercollegiate athletics and separated components into three categories: (1) Athletic Financial Assistance (Scholarships), (2) Equivalence in Other Athletic Benefits and Opportunities, and (3) Effective Accommodation of Student Interests and Abilities. Section 1 simply requires that institutions provide financial assistance for members of each sex in proportion to their participation ratio within the intercollegiate athletic department. The second section considers benefits that are measurable, which include travel and expenses, assignment and compensation of coaches, and equipment and supplies, as well as benefits that are not financially measurable (e.g., practice or game schedules, training services, publicity). The final section requires institutions to accommodate the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex. Athletic departments can effectively accommodate men and women in the following ways:

- Where intercollegiate level participation opportunities for male and female students are provided in numbers substantially proportionate to their respective enrollments (prong one); or
- Where the members of one sex have been and are underrepresented among intercollegiate athletics, whether the institution can show a history and continuing practice of program expansion which is demonstrably responsive to the developing interests and abilities of the members of that sex (prong two); or
- Where the members of one sex are underrepresented among intercollegiate athletes, and the institution cannot show continuing practice of program expansion such as that cited above, whether it can be demonstrated that the interest and abilities of the members of that sex have been fully accommodated by the present program (prong

three) (Office for Civil Rights, 1979).

Morden (2013) asserts that the key purpose of any equality or diversity legislation is to ensure that individuals and organizations do not discriminate against others. The author notes that managers and organizations hold the responsibility to ensure that there is no such discrimination caused by employers or by their failure to ensure that the processes of employment are responsible for and kept free from discriminatory behaviors or practices.

2.5 DIVERSITY IN HEAD FOOTBALL COACHING POSITIONS

Diversity is defined broadly across many disciplines, and the literature suggests that there are many definitions of diversity; however, the following definition is presented for this research study: Diversity is the variety of ways in which people who compromise the population of an organization are different from one another. A diverse academic environment and workplace includes individuals who bring unique perspectives or outlooks to the institution (University of Pittsburgh, 2016). The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing individual differences. These differences can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. Diversity is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is also about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual (University of Oregon, 2016).

For the purposes of this literature review, diversity will be primarily examined through

the lens of race. Sagas and Cunningham (2005) found that African-American coaches are underrepresented in higher status positions and have significantly fewer promotions and lower status in their coaching careers than white coaches. African-American coaches also perceive more barriers to head coaching opportunities than white coaches and perceive race to be a significant barrier to career advancement and opportunities. Valuing diversity and having a diverse workforce are ethically correct and make financial sense (Green, 2010). Workforce diversity and inclusion are essential for colleges and universities just as it is important in corporate America today (Bye, 2007).

Many argue that the governing body of major college sports, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), should employ more influence over head coach hiring decisions and use its power to urge its membership to provide equal access opportunities for minority coaching candidates. Harrison, Lapchick, and Janson (2009) discuss diversity and highlight that key stakeholders need to work in concert to increase diversity in hiring within intercollegiate athletics.

Kovacic (2008) points out the disparity between the number of white head coaches and African-American head coaches at Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) universities. The author notes that there were only three African-American head football coaches out of 119 FBS institutions in 2008. The author compares the head coach disparity in the NCAA FBS football with the NFL. In 2008, the percentage of African-American head coaches in the NFL were 18.75 percent, or more than three times higher than the percentage of African-American head football coaches at FBS universities. The author asserts the primary reason for this difference is the NFL Rooney Rule.

According to Collins (2007), the National Football League (NFL) Rooney Rule has

proven effective in increasing diversity among head coaches because the policy forces decision-makers harboring an unconscious bias to expand previously restricted coaching networks and come face-to-face with a minority candidate they would never have considered otherwise. The Rooney Rule is an NFL policy, established in 2013, that mandates that every NFL team interview at least one minority candidate upon a head coach vacancy or be subjected to a significant monetary fine. The author asserts that, without the Rooney Rule, NFL team decision makers would likely continue to rely upon unconscious bias in identifying head coach prospects. Some would argue that the Rooney Rule has made only slow progress to counteract the unconscious bias. However, the Rule has at least caused each NFL team to make extensive contact with a minority candidate who may impress the decision makers and receive the job or be considered for future coaching opportunities as a result of the interview (Proxmire, 2008).

More recently, in 2015, the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sports at the University of Central Florida released its annual study before the college football season and revealed that 87.5 percent of the 128 head football coaches in the NCAA football bowl subdivision were white (12.5 percent of head coaches were non-white). The numbers are striking considering 59 percent of football players were non-white, including 53.4 percent African-American (Lapchick, 2015). The annual report is authored by a leading expert in the field that advocates for a racial conscience in hiring practices. In addition to the diversity report by Dr. Richard Lapchick, the Black Coaches and Administrators Association formerly produced an annual report to encourage accountability and encourage institutions to look into a more diverse pool of candidates so that the best coach can be chosen, regardless of race or ethnicity. The report examined and graded head football coach searches and the selection process of institutions using certain criteria (e.g, communication, the hiring and search committee, candidates interviewed, time frame, and

affirmative action). Dr. Richard Lapchick agrees with the Black Coaches Association's call for an open and objective process to hiring head football coaches and recommends that institutions begin to adhere to interview and hiring guidelines that increase representation among the coaching ranks. Lapchick and others have recommended that the NCAA adopt a rule ("Eddie Robinson Rule") mandating that minorities be interviewed for all head coaching positions similar to the NFL's Rooney Rule (Harrison & Yee, 2009).

A recent study involving African-American coaches in football found that potentially discriminate hiring practices might continue to prosper in intercollegiate athletics even though increases in African-American head coach representation evokes optimism. The author's findings also revealed the possibility of more accepting attitudes among intercollegiate athletics stakeholders (e.g., administration, alumni, fans, and boosters) in regards to coaches of more diversified races, ethnicities, experiences, and backgrounds. The author noted that progressive changes in institutionalized and discriminate practices must continue and change is taking place (Bopp, 2010).

2.6 REVIEW OF LITERATURE SUMMARY

The review of literature is intended to provide a framework for which this study on hiring practices used by Division I FBS Athletic Directors is based. The review brings to light certain themes that are important to the study of hiring practices for head football coaches: the importance of the hiring framework or process, the key stakeholders that are involved in the hiring process, the role of the university leadership, the involvement of executive search firms, the consideration of diversity in the hiring practice, the importance of "fit" when hiring, and the

challenges to hiring a head football coach.

More specifically, the literature describes the importance of having a process for hiring personnel. This study will use the hiring processes developed by other experts as a benchmark for the hiring process for head football coaches in intercollegiate athletics. The results of the research will provide insight on the hiring process and practices used by Athletic Directors.

The hiring practices literature also suggests that there are strategies for effective search committees when hiring personnel and benefits to using executive search firms for positions that meet certain criteria. The results of this study will assess the current landscape regarding the use of search committees and executive search firms when hiring head football coaches at the Division I "Power 5" level within intercollegiate athletics.

Much of the literature also indicates that diversity is important in the hiring process and that there should be efforts to make diversity a priority when hiring head football coaches. These efforts are believed to lead to a more effective hiring process.

Lastly, the hiring practices literature also emphasizes the importance of "fit" when considering candidates for a position. The literature suggests that if a person fits into the organization, the individual and the organization are more effective. Moreover, the literature also indicates the importance of alignment regarding an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities with the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the actual job. The theme of "fit" and its link to job performance is important when considering candidates for the head football coaching position.

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLGY

3.1.1 Design and setting

Data for this study were collected by the quantitative method of a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to all 65 colleges and universities competing in the "Power 5 Conferences" of Division I-FBS of the NCAA. The study was a descriptive study based on an examination of hiring practices at Division I-FBS "Power 5" athletic departments. Additionally, the research identified trends and common practices.

3.1.2 Data collection

The collection process for the survey consisted of two emails to Division I-FBS "Power 5" Athletic Directors. The initial mailing was an email from the President/CEO of the Lead1 Association (Division I Athletic Director Association), notifying Athletic Directors of the survey and encouraging their prompt response. The email contained a link to the electronic survey. The support of the Division I Athletic Directors was an important part of the data collection efforts for this study.

Data were collected via a questionnaire sent to the Athletic Directors of all 65 institutions. An electronic questionnaire was used because of the efficient and cost effective means it allows for data collection and analysis. The survey was a self-designed instrument, and its questions were based on the review of hiring practice literature. The data are considered cross-sectional and will be captured at one point in time. The instrument was tested by two experts in the talent acquisition and higher education management fields who submitted comments and revisions prior to mass distribution. According to Creswell (2003), this type of pre-testing is important to improve questions, confirm the format of the survey, and establish the validity of the instrument. The individual survey was cross-referenced to the research questions.

Approximately one week after the electronic mailing of the link to the survey instrument, a follow-up message was sent to all 65 Athletic Directors. This message again encouraged participation in the survey.

The questionnaire, included in Appendix A, contains 38 items and uses the following to collect the data: categorical scales (yes/no), nominal scales, ranking scales, and Likert-like items based on a scale from completely agree to completely disagree. The individual survey items are cross-referenced to the research questions and shown in Appendix B.

Data analysis began with a report on the number of returns and non-returns of the survey instrument. Demographic and descriptive data are presented in frequency distributions for the responses using Qualtrics statistical software. The result of the data collection and analysis is a description of the hiring process for hiring head football coaches. The analysis is based on frequency distributions for the specific survey item responses.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the data collected by the survey questionnaire. The data is organized by using the research questions introduced in chapter one.

The web link for the electronic survey was sent in an email to the Athletic Directors of all 65 Division I (FBS) "Power 5" institutions. The email was sent from Tom McMillen, the President/CEO of the Lead1 Association (i.e., Division I Athletic Directors' Association). Twenty-eight surveys were returned. After eliminating incomplete surveys, 26 surveys remained for data analysis. These 26 completed surveys represent a response rate of 40 percent. The survey was conducted using "skip logic" so that all respondents answering "yes" to the question, "Have you hired a head football coach during your time as an Athletic Director at the institution where you are currently employed or by a former employing institution?" were advanced in the survey and asked to answer the remaining survey questions. Of the 26 completed surveys, 17 Athletic Directors indicated that he/she actually hired a head football coach during their tenure as an Athletic Director at a Division I "Power 5" institution. The number of responses to the survey questions may vary due to respondents choosing not to answer specific questions.

Data was analyzed using Qualtrics (insight platform) software. The first step in data analysis was to evaluate frequency distributions, as they relate to the research questions that are presented. The presentation and analysis of the data in this chapter are depicted in 38 tables.

4.1 BACKGROUND DATA REGARDING RESPONDENTS

Table 1 indicates the make-up of the responding Athletic Directors and their athletic conference affiliation. Each "Power 5" Conference was represented in the survey results.

Table 1. *Conference Affiliation of Responding Athletic Director*

"Power 5" Conference:	**Number**	**%**
Atlantic Coast Conference	7	26.92
Big Ten Conference	6	23.08
Big Twelve Conference	5	19.23
Pacific Twelve Conference	4	15.38
Southeastern Conference	4	15.38
Total	26	100

Table 2 indicates the length of time each Athletic Director has served as an Athletic Director at his/her current institution and in their career.

Table 2. *Length of Time Served as Athletic Director*

Question	**0-2 Years**	**# of ADs**	**3-6 Years**	**# of ADs**	**7-11 Years**	**# of ADs**	**12-15 Years**	**# of ADs**	**16+ Years**	**# of ADs**	**Total**
At your current institution?	15.38%	4	30.77%	8	30.77%	8	11.54%	3	11.54%	3	26
In your career?	11.54%	3	11.54%	3	30.77%	8	26.92%	7	19.23%	5	26

As Table 2 indicates, 30.77 percent of the responding Athletic Directors have been an Athletic Director for 7-11 years in their career, and 26.92 percent of responding Athletic Directors have 12-15 years of experience as an Athletic Director. 19.23 percent of responding Athletic Directors had 16 plus years of experience as an Athletic Director in their career.

4.2 HIRING PROCESS AND FRAMEWORKS

What are the specific frameworks used for hiring head football coaches?

The results of the survey, displayed in Table 3, indicate that majority of Athletic Departments (61.54 percent) have no written policy or guidelines for hiring head coaches.

Table 3. *Number of Athletic Departments That Have a Written Policy or Guidelines for Hiring Head Coaches*

Athletic Department has written policy or guidelines for hiring head coaches:	**Number**	**%**
YES	10	38.46
NO	16	61.54

When asked about a specific hiring process for hiring a new head football coach, 53.85 percent of responding Athletic Directors indicated they follow a specific process for hiring head football coaches, while 46.15 percent of responding Athletic Directors indicated that they follow no specific guidelines for hiring new head football coaches (Table 4).

Table 4. *Number of Athletic Directors That Follow a Specific Process for Hiring Head Football Coaches*

Athletic Director follows a specific hiring process for hiring new head football coach:	**Number**	**%**
YES	14	53.85
NO	12	46.15

Table 5 shows the response to the question regarding an Athletic Director having a "short list" of potential head coach candidates prior to an actual vacancy of the head football coaching position. The data suggests that 92 percent of responding Athletic Directors believe that he/she should have a "short list" of potential head football coach candidates. More specifically, Table 5 shows that 76 percent of Athletic Directors responded that he/she should definitely have a "short list" prior to a head football coach vacancy. Please note that one of the twenty-six respondents did not answer this question.

Table 5. *Number of Athletic Directors Who Believe They Should Have a "Short List" of Potential Head Football Coach Candidates Prior to an Actual Vacancy*

Athletic Director should have a "short list" of head football coach candidates:	**Number**	**%**
Definitely Yes	19	76.00
Probably Yes	4	16.00
Might or might not	2	8.00
Probably Not	0	0.00
Definitely Not	0	0.00

Table 6 displays responses related to the formal training/education for hiring head football coaches. Table 6 shows that 65.38 percent of responding Athletic Directors did not receive any formal training or education for hiring head football coaches, while 34.62 percent of responding Athletic Directors did receive some training or education for hiring head football coaches. Further, Table 7 shows that of the 9 respondents that answered "yes" to the question about formal training/education, 44.44 received training and education for hiring head football coaches through "on the job training".

Table 6. *Number of Athletic Directors That Received Formal Training/Education for Hiring Head Football Coaches*

Formal Training/Education for Hiring Head Football Coaches:	Number	%
YES	9	34.62
NO	17	65.38

Table 7. *Training/Education Method Received for Hiring Head Football Coaches*

Method of Training/Education:	Number	%
Seminar or Equivalent (e.g., D-IA AD Institute Program)	2	22.22
Certificate Program	0	0.00
Undergraduate School Course	1	11.11
Graduate School Course	0	0.00
On the Job Training	4	44.44
Other (Please Specify)	2	22.22

Two respondents in Table 7 indicated that he/she received education or training by other means. One Athletic Director indicated that he had previous head football coaching experience while the second Athletic Director had significant experience hiring other high profile positions (i.e., hiring of head men's basketball coach).

As Table 8 displays, of the responding Athletic Directors, 100 percent indicated that their hiring practice included a written job description or profile of the head football coach position. As the review of the literature indicated, job descriptions are the foundation of the hiring process and are essential to defining the role of the job and the main tasks to be carried out.

Table 8. *Hiring Practice Includes Written Job Description or Profile of the Head Football Coach Position*

Athletic Department Has Written Job Description or Profile:	Number	%
YES	17	100
NO	0	0.00

The data in Table 9 is not a surprise and suggests that the hiring of a head football coach is an extremely confidential process. As Table 9 shows, 94.12 percent of responding Athletic Directors consider confidentiality extremely important in the hiring process for a head football coach.

Table 9. *Importance of Confidentiality in the Hiring Process for a Head Football Coach*

Importance of Confidentiality in the Process:	Number	%
Extremely Important	16	94.12
Very Important	1	5.88
Moderately Important	0	0.00
Slightly Important	0	0.00
Not At All Important	0	0.00

The survey questionnaire also asked how important the length of time was for hiring a head football coach from initiating the process to closing the deal. As indicated in Table 10, of the responding Athletic Directors, 41.18 percent and 52.94 percent believed it was extremely important and very important, respectively.

Table 10. *Length of Time for Hiring a Head Football Coach from Initiating the Process to Closing the Deal*

Length of Time for Hiring:	Number	%
Extremely Important	7	41.18
Very Important	9	52.94
Moderately Important	1	5.88
Slightly Important	0	0.00
Not At All Important	0	0.00

The survey also attempted to identify the significance of search or selection committees in the process for hiring head football coaches. Of responding Athletic Directors, 70.59 percent indicated that he/she did not use a search or selection committee to assist with the head football coach hiring process (Table 11).

Table 11. *Use of Search or Selection Committee for Hiring Head Football Coaches*

Use of Search or Selection Committee:	Number	%
YES	5	29.41
NO	12	70.59

As a review of the literature indicated, interviews are a very important component of any hiring process. When asked about "who" had direct interview time with the head football coach candidate(s), Table 12 shows that the Athletic Director, University Chancellor or President, and the Deputy Athletic Director or equivalent were the individuals that had the majority of the direct interview time with the candidates. One hundred percent of the respondents indicated that Athletic Directors had direct interview time with the candidate, followed by 82.35 percent of the University Chancellors or Presidents, and 64.71 percent of Deputy Athletic Directors.

Table 12. *The Individuals Who had Direct Interview Time with the Head Football Coach Candidate(s)*

Individual with Direct Interview Time with Head Football Coach Candidate(s):	**Number**	**%**
Athletic Director	17	100
Deputy Athletic Director or equivalent	11	64.71
Chancellor/President	14	82.35
Vice Chancellor/Vice President	1	5.88
Board of Trustee Member (Regent, etc.)	5	29.41
Athletics Booster	2	11.76
Alumnus/a	1	5.88
Former Letter Winner	2	11.76
Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR)	4	23.53
Current Football Student-Athlete	0	0.00
Advisor in the college football industry (e.g., colleague, retired head football coach, etc.)	2	11.76
External Search Firm	7	41.18
Other (Please Specify)	0	0.00

Table 13 displays the level of involvement that the institution's human resource staff has in the hiring process for a head football coach. The majority of the respondents indicated that the institution's human resource staff had moderate or little involvement (70.58 percent) in the hiring process for a head football coach.

Table 13. *Involvement of Institution's Human Resources Staff in the Hiring Process for a Head Football Coach*

Level of Involvement of Institution's HR Staff in Hiring Process for Head Football Coach	Number	%
A great deal	3	17.65
A lot	1	5.88
A moderate amount	6	35.29
A little	6	35.29
Not at all	1	5.88

Table 14 shows the responses to questions related to background checks. 100 percent of the responding Athletic Directors indicated that the following background checks were completed prior to signing an employment contract with the head football coach: criminal background check, NCAA background check, and education degree verification.

Table 14. *Background Checks Completed Prior to Signing an Employment Contract with Head Football Coach*

Type of Background Check and Completion:	YES	%	NO	%
Criminal Background Check	17	100	0	0.00
NCAA Background Check	17	100	0	0.00
Education (Degree/Credential Verification)	17	100	0	0.00
Other (Please Specify)	1	100	0	0.00

The survey questionnaire also investigated the role of reference checks in the hiring process and which individuals conduct the reference checks for the final candidate(s). As Table 15 shows, of the responding Athletic Directors, 70.59 percent indicated that the Athletic Director

conducted reference checks on the final candidate(s). Additionally, 52.94 percent of the Athletic Directors indicated that the Deputy Athletic Director or equivalent also participated in reference checks of the final candidate(s). Also, 52.94 percent of respondents indicated that an external consultant or search firm conducted reference checks.

Table 15. *Individuals or Offices That Conducted Reference Checks on the Final Candidate(s)*

Individuals or Offices Conducted Reference Checks	Number	%
Athletic Director	12	70.59
Deputy Athletic Director or equivalent	9	52.94
Chancellor/President	2	11.76
Vice Chancellor/Vice President	1	5.88
Board of Trustee Member (Regent)	0	0.00
Athletics Booster	0	0.00
Alumnus/a	0	0.00
Former Varsity Letter Winner	1	5.88
University Human Resources	8	47.06
External Consultant/Search Firm	9	52.94
Other (Please Specify)	4	23.53

4.3 STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED IN THE HIRING PROCESS

What stakeholders are involved in the hiring process for a head football coach?

Hiring process literature suggests numerous participants may be involved in the hiring of a high profile employee. The survey questionnaire addressed what stakeholders are involved in the hiring process for a head football coach. Before any stakeholders are acknowledged, Table 16 shows that 57.69 percent of the responding Athletic Directors actually hired a head football coach during their tenure at their current school. Meanwhile, 34.62 percent of responding Athletic Directors had never hired a head football coach while serving as an Athletic Director.

Please note that the two Athletic Directors that hired a head football coach at a previous institution were both employed by a "Power 5" Division I institution.

Table 16. *Number of Responding Athletic Directors That Hired a Head Football Coach During their Time as Athletic Director*

Athletic Directors that Hired a Head Football Coach During their Time as AD	Number	%
Yes, at the institution I am currently employed by	15	57.69
Yes, at an institution where I previously served as Athletic Director (please identify conference membership of said institution)	2	7.69
Not while I was an athletic director	9	34.62

When asked about a "point person" or "leader" who led the hiring process for the head football coach, survey results were very conclusive. As indicated in Table 17, of the responding Athletic Directors, 94.12 percent said that one individual served as the "point person" or "leader" for the search of the head football coach. In 15 of the 16 responses for "yes", the Athletic Director was the point person and leader of the search.

Table 17. *Point Person or Leader Who was Most Instrumental in the Hiring of the Head Football Coach*

Was there one individual who led the hiring process for a head football coach?	Number	%
YES (Please identify title)	16	94.12
NO	1	5.88

Tables 18 shows that with the exception of an outside search firm, 58.82 percent of the

responding Athletic Directors included individual stakeholders outside of the Athletic Department and/or University faculty/staff in the head football coach hiring process. Subsequently, the results in Table 19 suggest that those individuals outside of the Athletic Department or University faculty/staff could be any of the following: alumnus/a of institution, Board of Trustee member, athletics booster, former varsity letter recipient, or advisor (other than external search firm). In the "other" category, one response that indicated that an analytics firm assisted in the hiring process. In majority of the cases, athletic department staff (82.35 percent) and the University Chancellor/President (76.47 percent) were most often involved in the hiring process.

Table 18. *With the Exception of an Outside Search Firm, Individual Stakeholders Outside of the Athletic Department and/or University Faculty/Staff Involved in the Head Football Coach Hiring Process*

Individuals outside of the Athletic Department and/or University faculty/staff involved in hiring head football coach:	**Number**	**%**
YES	10	58.82
NO	7	41.18

Table 19. *Internal and External Stakeholders Assisted in the Hiring Process for Head Football Coach*

Internal and External Stakeholders Involved in Hiring Process for Head Football Coach	Number	%
Student-Athlete(s)	2	11.76
Enrolled Students	0	0.00
Faculty Member (Non-FAR)	2	11.76
Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR)	5	29.41
Athletic Department Staff	14	82.35
University (Non-Athletic) Staff	1	5.88
Chancellor/President	13	76.47
Senior University Administrator	4	23.53
Board of Trustee Member (Regents, Directors, etc.)	7	41.18
Alumnus/a of the Institution	2	11.76
Former Varsity Letter Recipient	4	23.53
Athletics Booster	1	5.88
Head Coach (In Any Sport at Your Institution)	2	11.76
Adviser in the College Football Industry, other than External Search Firm (e.g., Colleague, Retired Head Football Coach)	6	35.29
Government Official	0	0.00
Other (Please Specify)	1	5.88

Table 20 depicts the level of the chancellor/president's involvement in the hiring process for the head football coach. The results were less conclusive and there appears to be a significant variance of involvement. As indicated in Table 20, 29.41 percent of the responding Athletic Directors said the Chancellor/President was involved "a moderate amount", while most Athletic Directors (41.18 percent) responded that the Chancellor/President was involved "a great deal" or "a lot".

Table 20. *Chancellor/President Involvement in the Hiring Process for Head Football Coach*

How involved is the Chancellor/President?	Number	%
A great deal	3	17.65
A lot	4	23.53
A moderate amount	5	29.41
A little	4	23.53
None at all	1	5.88

Table 21 conveys the usage of search or selection committees in the process for hiring a head football coach. Of the 5 respondents that answered "yes" to using a search or selection committee in the hiring process, 3 of the 5 respondents used 4-6 individuals as part of their search committee, while 2 of the 5 respondents used 1-3 individuals as part of their search committee, as shown in Table 21.

Table 21. *Number of Individuals who were Part of Search/Selection Committee*

Number of Individuals Part of Search Committee	Number	%
1-3 Individuals	2	40.00
4-6 Individuals	3	60.00
7-12 Individuals	0	0.00
13 or More Individuals	0	0.00

The results of the survey, displayed in Table 22, describe the stakeholders that served on the search committee for the head football coach. 100 percent of responding Athletic Directors indicated that the Athletic Director and Deputy Athletic Director (or equivalent) served as a member of the search committee for the head football coach, and 60 percent of the responding Athletic Directors indicated that a Senior University Administrator and Board of Trustee member served as a member of the search committee.

Table 22. *Stakeholders That Served on the Search Committee for Head Football Coach*

Title of Individual Served On Search Committee	Number	%
Athletic Director	5	100.00
Chancellor/President	2	40.00
Student-Athlete	1	20.00
Faculty Athletics Representative	2	40.00
Faculty Member (Non-FAR)	0	0.00
Senior University Administrator (Non-Athletic)	3	60.00
University Non-Athletic Staff Member	0	0.00
Board of Trustee Member or Equivalent	3	60.00
Alumnus/a of Institution	1	20.00
Deputy Athletic Director or Equivalent	5	100.00
Assistant or Associate Athletic Director or Equivalent	2	40.00
Athletics Booster	0	0.00
Former Football Varsity Letter Recipient	1	20.00
Head Coach from Institution (Other than Football)	0	0.00
Former Head Football Coach	1	20.00
Government Official (City, County, State)	0	0.00
Enrolled Student	0	0.00
Other (Please Specify)	0	0.00

When asked if it was standard practice for the top head football coach candidate(s) to meet with the University Chancellor/President prior to making an official offer of employment, 88.24 percent of responding Athletic Directors indicated that the University Chancellor/President did meet with the top head football coach candidate(s) prior to making an official offer of employment, as depicted in Table 23.

The survey questionnaire then turned to the approval of the hire. With results shown in Table 24, the majority of Athletic Directors indicate that 88.24 percent of Chancellors/Presidents

approve the hire of the head football coach. While 58.82 percent of Athletic Directors approve the hire, it is somewhat surprising that this number is not 100 percent. This statistic indicates that perhaps the Athletic Director is presenting the hire to the Chancellor/President and, therefore, does not require his/her own approval.

Table 23. *Top Football Head Coach Candidate(s) Meets with University Chancellor/President Prior to Official Offer of Employment*

Top Candidate(s) Meets with Chancellor Prior to Official Offer of Employment:	**Number**	**%**
YES	15	88.24
NO	2	11.76

Table 24. *Approval of Hiring the Head Football Coach Candidate(s)*

Who Approves the Hire of the Head Football Coach:	**Number**	**%**
Chancellor/President	15	88.24
Board of Trustee/Board of Regents	6	35.29
University Athletics Association Board	4	23.53
Athletic Director	10	58.82
Other (Please Specify)	0	0.00

The responses to the survey question listed in Table 25 are used to indicate who served as the primary contact negotiator on behalf of the institution for the hiring of the head football coach. The majority of the respondents (64.71 percent) indicated that the Athletic Director was the primary contract negotiator for the hire. The responses also suggest that the general terms of the agreement are handled by the Athletic Director and the details are negotiated by General Counsel and the representative of the head football coach.

Table 25. *Primary Contract Negotiator on Behalf of Institution for the Hiring of the Head Football Coach*

Primary Contract Negotiator on Behalf of the Institution:	Number	%
Athletic Director	11	64.71
Deputy Athletic Director or Equivalent	1	5.88
Chancellor/President	0	0.00
Vice Chancellor/Vice President	0	0.00
Chief Human Resource Officer	0	0.00
General Counsel	4	23.53
Other (Please Specify)	1	5.88

4.4 EXTERNAL SEARCH FIRMS

How often are external search firms used in the process for hiring head football coaches?

The personnel selection literature suggests numerous benefits in the use of external search firms for high profile positions. The respondents were asked if it would be beneficial for Athletic Directors to use the services of an external search firm to assist in the hiring process for a head football coach. As Table 26 shows, 11.76 percent of responding Athletic Directors strongly agreed that external search firms are beneficial to assist in the hiring process for a head football coach, and 29.41 percent somewhat agreed. Combined, this suggests that 41.17 percent of respondents believe external search firms would be beneficial to use in the hiring process for a head football coach. The results also show that 41.18 percent of the respondents neither agreed or disagreed that external search firms are beneficial to the process.

Table 26. *Perceived Benefits of External Search Firm*

Perceived Benefits of External Search Firm	Number	%
Strongly Agree	2	11.76
Somewhat Agree	5	29.41
Neither Agree nor Disagree	7	41.18
Somewhat Disagree	3	17.65
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00

When asked about the use of an external search firm to assist with the hiring of a head football coach, Table 27 shows that 64.71 percent of the responding Athletic Directors used an external search firm to assist in the hiring of a head football coach. Conversely, 35.29 percent of the respondents did not use an external search firm. As displayed in Table 28, of the responding Athletic Directors who did not use an external search firm, 100 percent of them stated that the primary reason for their decision not to use a search firm was due to personal preference.

Table 27. *Athletic Director Used External Search Firm to Assist with the Hiring of a Head Football Coach*

Use of Search Firm to Assist with Hiring:	Number	%
YES	11	64.71
NO	6	35.29

Table 28. *Primary Barriers that Prevented use of External Search Firm*

Primary Barrier That Prevented Use of External Search Firm:	Number	%
Financial Resources	0	0.00
Time	0	0.00
Lack of Familiarity with External Consultants	0	0.00
Personal Preference: Did Not Want External Consultant Involved	6	100
Other (Please Specify)	0	0.00

The survey questionnaire also captured insights from Athletic Directors that had experience using external search firms when hiring a head football coach. Table 29 highlights the responses to the survey regarding the areas of value when using an external search firm to assist in the hiring process. As Table 29 shows, most Athletic Directors responding to the survey (90.91 percent) believe that providing confidentiality to the hiring process and gauging the interest level of candidates were significant values that the search firms offered.

Table 29. *Areas of Value External Search Firm Bring to the Hiring Process*

Areas of Value Search Firms Bring to the Hiring Process	Number	%
Saved Time	6	54.55
Provided Confidentiality	10	90.91
Integrity in Process	5	45.45
Logistics (Travel Arrangements)	6	54.55
Assisted with Interviews and Scheduling	8	72.73
Conducted Reference Checks	7	63.64
Provided Candidate Profiles	5	45.45
Provided a Pool of Candidates	1	9.09
Assisted with Contract Negotiations	1	9.09
Liaison to Gauge Interest Level of Candidates	10	90.91
Helped Guide/Assist in Overall Process	5	45.45
Performed Background Checks on Final Pool of Candidates	6	54.55
Other (Please Specify)	0	0.00

When asked about the cost of using a search firm to assist with the hiring of a head football coach, 50 percent of the respondents spent less than $50,000 and 50 percent spent between $50,000 - $100.000 for a search firm's services (Table 30). The survey questionnaire also attempted to measure the worth and satisfaction level when using a search firm. Responses to the survey, shown in Table 31, indicate that 30 percent of the respondents believed the search firm was "definitely" worth the cost, and 70 percent believed that the search firm was "mostly" worth the cost. Table 32 reveals that of the responding Athletic Directors, 70 percent were very satisfied with the search firm and 30 percent were somewhat satisfied.

Table 30. *Cost of Search Firm Services*

Cost of Services:	Number	%
Less than $50,000	5	50.00
$50,000 - $100,000	5	50.00
$100,001 - $150,000	0	0.00
Greater than $150,000	0	0.00

Table 31. *Worthiness of Search Firm*

Was the Search Firm Worth the Cost?	Number	%
Definitely Yes	3	30.00
Mostly Yes	7	70.00
Somewhat Unsatisfied	0	0.00
Very Unsatisfied	0	0.00

Table 32. *Level of Satisfaction with Search Firm Services*

Satisfaction with Search Firm	Number	%
Very Satisfied	7	70.00
Somewhat Satisfied	3	30.00
Somewhat Unsatisfied	0	0.00
Very Unsatisfied	0	0.00

4.5 CONSIDERATION OF DIVERSITY IN THE HIRING PROCESS

To what extent do athletic departments consider diversity in the hiring process?

The survey questionnaire also investigated diversity in the hiring process for a head football coach. Responses to the survey question, shown in Table 33, indicate that majority of institutions (94.12 percent) of the responding Athletic Directors, do not have a written policy that requires at least one minority candidate to be interviewed for a head coaching position. However, 82.35 percent of responding Athletic Directors make it a standard practice to interview

at least one minority candidate as part of their hiring process for a head coach (Table 34). When asked if he/she would support a policy similar to the NFL's Rooney Rule that requires at least one minority candidate to be interviewed during any head football coach search, the results indicate that majority of the responding Athletic Directors would support such a policy mandate at some level (Table 35).

Table 33. *Written Policy at Institution Requiring at Least One Minority Candidate to be Interviewed During Hiring Process for Head Coach*

Written Policy at Institution Requiring at Least One Minority to be Interviewed:	**Number**	**%**
YES	1	5.88
NO	16	94.12

Table 34. *Standard Practice to Interview One Minority Candidate as Part of Hiring Process for Head Coach*

Standard Practice to Interview One Minority Candidate:	**Number**	**%**
YES	14	82.35
NO	3	17.65

Table 35. *Support of a Policy Similar to the NFL's Rooney Rule that Requires One Minority Candidate to be Interviewed During any Head Football Coach Search*

Support of a Policy Similar to NFL Rooney Rule:	**Number**	**%**
Yes, would support a policy mandate from the NCAA level	9	53
Yes, would support a policy mandate from the Conference level	4	24
Yes, would support a policy mandate from the institutional level	6	35
Not Sure	5	29
No	0	0

4.6 IMPORTANCE OF "FIT" WHEN CONSIDERING CANDIDATES

How important is "fit" when considering candidates and hiring a head football coach?

The literature suggests that "fit" and its link to job performance is important when considering candidates for a position. The survey attempted to measure the selection criteria for hiring a head football coach. When asked to rank nine selection criteria for a head football coach, "high integrity and character" was ranked the most important criteria by majority of the respondents. The other eight criteria were less conclusive in terms of importance and there appeared to be a variance in responses (Table 36).

The results in Table 37 display how the head football coach candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities are evaluated to determine if he meets the job requirements and expectations for success. 100 percent of the responding Athletic Directors believe that performance record is a critical part of the evaluation process, followed by team academics and interviews (94.12 percent). The results showed that institutional recruiting rankings were the least utilized item when evaluating a head football coach candidate.

When asked about the importance that the personal and professional values of the head coaching candidate were aligned with the norms and values of the institution and/or athletic department, 100 percent of the responding Athletic Directors, believed it was “extremely important”, as presented in Table 38. This is not surprising, considering that the literature related to person-organization fit theory suggests the significance of aligning values and norms of the candidate and that of the hiring organization.

Table 36. *Rank of Nine Selection Criteria for a Head Football Coach (1 Being Most Important and 9 Being Generally Important)*

Selection Criteria (item)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Previous Head Coaching Experience	1	2	2	2	3	1	0	1	1	13
	7.69%	15.38%	15.38%	15.38%	23.08%	7.69%	0.00%	7.69%	7.69%	
Track Record of Supporting Academic Mission	0	3	1	3	1	2	2	0	0	12
	0.00%	25.00%	8.33%	25.0%	8.33%	16.67%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	
Win/Loss Record as Head Coach or Coordinator	1	4	4	2	3	1	0	0	0	15
	6.67%	26.67%	26.67%	13.33%	20.00%	6.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	
Strong Leadership and Role Model for Student-Athletes	0	2	1	2	4	2	0	0	1	12
	0.00%	16.67%	8.33%	16.67%	33.33%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	8.33%	
Role as Ambassador for Institution with Public Affairs/Development	0	2	1	2	1	0	6	2	0	14
	0.00%	14.29%	7.14%	14.29%	7.14%	0.00%	42.86%	14.29%	0.00%	
High Integrity & Character	9	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	14
	64.29%	0.00%	7.14%	0.00%	0.00%	7.14%	7.14%	7.14%	7.14%	
Strong Recruiter	3	0	3	1	1	4	2	1	0	15
	20.00%	0.00%	20.00%	6.67%	6.67%	26.67%	13.33%	6.67%	0.00%	
Connection to Institution	3	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	6	15
	20.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%	13.33%	6.67%	13.33%	40.00%	
Connection to Region where Institution is Located	0	3	2	1	1	1	1	4	4	17
	0.00%	17.65%	11.76%	5.88%	5.88%	5.88%	5.88%	23.53%	23.53%	

Table 37. *Evaluation of Head Coach Candidate's Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities to Determine if They Meet the Job Requirements and Expectations for Success*

Method to Evaluate Candidates Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:	**Number**	**%**
Performance Record	17	100
Team Academics (i.e., graduation rate and academic progress rate)	16	94.12
Recruiting Rankings	6	35.29
In-Person/Phone Interviews	16	94.12
Personal References	12	70.59
Background Checks	12	70.59
Other (Please Specify)	3	17.65

Table 38. *Importance of the Personal and Professional Values of the Head Football Coaching Candidate are Aligned with the Norms and Values of the Institution and/or Athletic Department*

Level of Importance of Values of Candidate Are Aligned with Norms and Values of Organization:	**Number**	**%**
Extremely Important	17	100
Very Important	0	0.00
Moderately Important	0	0.00
Slightly Important	0	0.00
Not At All Important	0	0.00

This section presented the results of the responses to the survey questionnaire. The next chapter presents a discussion of the findings and a detailed analysis of the data.

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, INTERPETATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter concludes the research study, with the first section presenting a summary. The second section presents conclusions and discussions from this study and data analysis, organized around the research questions identified in chapter one. The third and final section of this chapter offers recommendations for practice and future research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine head football coach hiring practices among intercollegiate athletic departments at the Division I FBS "Power 5" level. Additionally, this study sought to identify trends and common practices regarding the hiring of a head football coach. Sixty-five Athletic Directors were invited to take a survey questionnaire. Twenty-six Athletic Directors responded and each of the five "Power" athletic conferences were represented. More than half of the responding Athletic Directors indicated that he/she had actually hired a head football coach during their tenure as an Athletic Director at a "Power 5" institution.

One of the goals of this study was to discover if Athletic Departments follow any specific framework when it comes to hiring coaching personnel. While the majority of the Athletic Directors reported that their institutions did not have a written policy or guidelines for hiring

head football coaches, approximately 54 percent indicated they had a specific process for hiring head football coaches. It appears that every Athletic Director differs from his/her peers and most likely follows a slightly varied process with some common procedures. The study looked at the hiring background of Athletic Directors and found that the majority of respondents did not have any formal education or training. Of those that expressed prior education, most came in the form of on-the-job training or experience hiring other high-profile coaches (i.e. head basketball coach).

When asked about the interview process, my analysis concluded that confidentiality and timeliness were very important factors, as expected. Background checks and reference checks are typically completed throughout the hiring process, however, the university human resource department was only involved a moderate or little amount of the time.

In my analysis, I also discovered the makeup of key stakeholders that were involved in the interview process. Although most Athletic Directors did not utilize a search committee in the hiring process, they did involve athletic department staff, specifically the Deputy Athletic Director or equivalent, as well as the Chancellor/President. It is important to note that the Chancellor/President's involvement generally came toward the end of the hiring process, to meet and approve of the final candidate. As expected, the Athletic Director served as the point person for the hire and the primary negotiator on behalf of the University during the hire and agreement phase of the process.

External search firms have become more prevalent in the intercollegiate athletics environment than ever before and I wanted to uncover the use and perceived value of external search firms in my study. The majority of Athletic Directors indicated that they had used an external search firm for the hiring of a head football coach. Those Athletic Directors that had not

used a search firm in the hiring process noted that their decision was due to personal preference. In my analysis, I learned that the following elements were most valued by the Athletic Directors who used search firms: confidentiality in the process, liaison to gauge interest level of candidates, and assistance with interviews and scheduling. Overall, the Athletic Directors were satisfied with the search firms' services and found the cost worthy of the services provided.

I examined, through this study, the practices utilized to incorporate diversity in the hiring process. Almost all of the respondents indicated that their institution did not have a written policy that required at least one minority candidate to be interviewed during the head coach hiring process. However, the majority of Athletic Directors revealed that it is a standard practice for them to interview at least one minority candidate. In my exploration of diversity in head football coaching searches, I found that most Athletic Directors would support a policy mandate, similar to the NFL's Rooney Rule, which requires at least one minority candidate to be interviewed during any head football coach search, at either the institutional, conference, or NCAA level. Although the majority of Athletic Directors make it a standard practice to interview at least one minority candidate for a head football coaching vacancy, it appears that those efforts are not enough when considering the literature review data, which indicates the underrepresentation of African-American head coaches. Perhaps a formal policy and enforcement may be needed in order to truly effect change with respect to diversity and inclusion.

Through this study, I wanted to determine the importance of "fit" when considering candidates during the head football coach hiring process. When given nine selection criteria, "high integrity and character" was ranked among the top most important characteristics of a head football coach. In order to evaluate how well a head football coach candidate fits within the

hiring university, the Athletic Directors placed emphasis on evaluating the following criteria: team performance record, team academics, and candidate performance during interviews. My analysis also concluded that all responding Athletic Directors found it "extremely important" that the personal and professional values of the head football candidate are aligned with the norms and values of the institution. This is not surprising, considering that the literature related to person-organization fit theory suggests the significance of aligning values and norms of the candidate and that of the hiring organization.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.2.1 Research Question #1: What are the specific frameworks used for hiring head football coaches?

The hiring of a head football coach is an extremely important aspect of an Athletic Director's job and the results of this study provide valuable insights from a foundational perspective. The literature review supports the importance of the head football coach hire and the myriad of influence a head football coach has on alumni, fans, and the campus community. However, the topic of inquiry has not been researched or studied in an academic setting until now.

Approximately 35 percent of the Athletic Directors that responded to this study's survey indicated that they had never hired a head football coach while serving as an Athletic Director. Since this is such an important aspect of an Athletic Director's job, it is startling to discover how many individuals in this position have never hired a head football coach. Not only are they operating without prior experience, but they are also lacking the appropriate guidelines and

framework to execute a successful hire.

The data collected using the survey instrument indicated that the majority of Athletic Departments do not have a written guideline for hiring head coaches. While 61.54 percent do not follow a written policy, most Athletic Directors do follow a specific process for hiring a head football coach. To prepare for the potential vacancy of the head football coaching position, the overwhelming majority of Athletic Directors who responded to the survey believe that he/she should have a "short list" of possible replacement candidates.

The foundation of a good search process begins with a solid job description or profile of the position. Overall, all of the survey respondents indicated that they utilize a written job description, conduct background checks and reference checks, and follow other vital processes while interviewing head football coach candidates. Although these components are important to the success of hiring a candidate, without having a structured process, there is more likelihood for mistakes, misjudgment, and unconscious bias.

5.2.2 Research Question #2: What stakeholders are involved in the hiring process for a head football coach?

As expected, the Athletic Director leads the search process and serves as the point person for the hiring of the head football coach. Without a formal written framework, the Athletic Director creates the process and decides which internal or external stakeholders to incorporate. The results of the survey indicate that some Athletic Directors tend to include Board of Trustee members, faculty athletics representatives, and external advisors (non-search firm) in a limited role. Less than 30 percent of Athletic Directors indicated the use of a search committee. Perhaps the importance of confidentiality and the timeliness of the search are factors that deter

Athletic Directors from creating a search committee. On the other hand, of those that utilized a search committee, the following stakeholders were primarily included: Deputy Athletic Director, Board of Trustee member, and senior university administrator.

As discovered in the survey, most head football coaching searches involved the Athletic Director and Chancellor/President as the chief university representatives. However, the Chancellor/President's role in the process tended to appear towards the end of the search. Most of the respondents to the survey revealed that the Chancellor/President was only involved a "moderate amount". In fact, almost 30 percent stated that their Chancellor/President was included "a little" or "none at all". Still, approximately 90 percent of Chancellors/Presidents met with the final candidate(s) and approved of the head football coach selection. This indicates that the Chancellor/President is less utilized in the "search" phase but more engaged in the "selection" and approval phase.

The study indicated that the human resources department at the institution typically did not have much involvement in the hiring process for the head football coach. Over 35 percent of responding Athletic Directors indicated the human resources staff was involved "a moderate amount", while an additional 35 percent noted only "a little" involvement. It was surprising to discover that the human resources department was not more utilized when conducting reference checks on the final candidate(s). However, the unemployment of the human resource department may be attributed to the use of an external search firm, who may perform similar duties to that of the human resources department.

5.2.3 Research Question #3: How often are external search firms used in the process for hiring head football coaches? What are the benefits?

Generally, the personnel selection literature suggests numerous benefits in the use of external search firms for high profile positions. The use of external search firms in the hiring of a high profile head coach appears to be a growing trend in the intercollegiate athletics world. Approximately 65 percent of the responding Athletic Directors indicated that they have used an external search firm in the past while engaging in a head football coach search. Conversely, 35 percent of Athletic Directors that had never used a search firm indicated that their reason was due to personal preference. Perhaps this is because of skepticism among Athletic Directors and lack of evidence to support the benefits of external search firms.

When given a list of areas of value that external search firms may bring to the search process, the responding Athletic Directors noted the following were items of significance: provided confidentiality to the process (90.91 percent), served as a liaison to gauge the interest level of candidates (90.91 percent), assisted with interviews and scheduling (72.73 percent), conducted reference checks (63.64 percent), and coordinated travel arrangements/logistics (54.55 percent). Overall, the survey shows that all of the Athletic Directors who used external search firms were either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with the firm's services. The evidence from this survey supports the notion that there are certain benefits gained by utilizing the services of an external search firm.

One factor considered in the decision to use a search firm is the cost incurred by the athletic department or university. Half of the responding Athletic Directors that used a search firm noted the cost to be less than $50,000, whereas the other half paid between $50,000 and $100,000 for the services. The survey data identifies that all responding Athletic Directors

believe the use of the search firm was worth the cost, with 30 percent answering "definitely yes" and 70 percent responding "mostly yes". The results suggest that there were no concerns or issues with the expense as it relates to the firm's value in the process. Overall, it appears that external search firms are valuable to the hiring process when used to "assist" and support Athletic Directors.

5.2.4 Research Question #4: To what extent do athletic departments consider diversity in the hiring process?

The literature review suggests that diversity and inclusion are important in the hiring process and many scholars have pointed out the underrepresentation of minorities in head football coaching positions within Division I athletics. Generally, the results of this study revealed that there is no standing policy within athletic departments when it comes to diversity and hiring head coaches. Although almost all (94 percent) of the responding Athletic Directors indicated no written policy in place, the overwhelming majority (82 percent) make it a standard practice to interview at least one minority candidate as a part of the hiring process of a head football coach.

Currently in the NLF, there is a mandate called the "Rooney Rule". This rule requires every team to interview at least one candidate of minority background each time they are looking to fill a head coaching position. When asked if they would support such a rule at either the institutional, conference, or NCAA level, most of the responding Athletic Directors indicated, "yes". This suggests that although formal framework lacks the inclusion of diversity, many Athletic Directors would be open to the creation of an official policy. At the same time, one responding Athletic Director expressed concern that the implementation of such a rule would not

be taken seriously if there was no strong commitment to diversity and inclusion, no real interview of a minority candidate, and no associated sanctions with non-compliance of the rule.

5.2.5 Research Question #5: How important is "fit" when considering candidates and hiring a head football coach?

The hiring of a head football coach is among the most important tasks of an Athletic Director. One very important element of hiring the right head football coach is assessing "fit". The literature suggests that if a person fits into the organization, the individual and the organization are more effective (Kristoff, 1996). When asked about the importance that the personal and professional values of the head coaching candidate were aligned with the norms and values of the institution and/or athletic department, 100 percent of the responding Athletic Directors believed it was "extremely important". These results simply validated the research literature in the context of head football coach hiring. Rynes and Gerhart (1990) noted that person-organization fit is most commonly assessed with the employment interview. The interview enables the organization (Athletic Director) and the candidates (potential head football coaches) an opportunity to interact through their discussions.

Additionally, one must evaluate the head coach candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities to determine if they meet and/or exceed the job requirements for the position. The study revealed that 100 percent of the responding Athletic Directors believe that performance record is a critical part of the evaluation process, followed by team academics and interviews (94.12 percent). Reference and background checks were also important elements to the process and the evaluation of the candidate(s). The research literature indicated that when assessing perceived "fit" of new hires, person-job fit was positively related to the overall job satisfaction and

commitment to the organization (Saks & Ashford, 1997).

The importance of "fit", reinforces the importance of the the interview process and the stakeholders that have interview time with the candidate(s). Considering the significant investment that a Division I FBS university makes in a head football coach and their program, it appears that the university leadership would benefit immensely by having multiple stakeholders and their perspectives incorporated into the hiring and selection process. Having only one or two stakeholders directly involved in the hiring process for a head football coach seems to be a short-sighted approach to such a high profile position. Person-job fit and person-organization fit are part of an assessment that really occurs during the interview and the associated interactions between the candidate and the hiring organization. "Fit" should include more than a gut feeling.

The study revealed that many Athletic Directors have little education or training in hiring head football coaches, and most Athletic Directors rely heavily on "on the job training". As a result, it appears that these hiring managers would benefit by some formal structure as it relates to a best practices model or guidelines for hiring head football coaches. Further, many Athletic Directors (and/or future Athletic Directors) would benefit by more training and education in regards to hiring best practices, which may include interview strategies and techniques. A best practices model would help eliminate any bias or mistakes in the hiring process while also providing consistency in the process. How a candidate "fits" is based on a very subjective platform that requires input and perspective from everyone involved in the interview and hiring process. "Fit" is extremely important as one tries to find and select the "right" person for the head football coaching position.

5.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The significance of this study is that it examines head football coach hiring practices among intercollegiate athletic departments at the Division I FBS "Power 5" level and may offer trends or common practices to assist athletic departments with hiring head football coaches. Although hiring practices have been a topic of interest and study in both academia and the corporate world for many years, my study of head football coach hiring practices will help bridge the gap that currently exists in athletic department hiring practices. The majority of the hiring practices literature focuses on the corporate and non-profit sectors (e.g., K-12, higher education) more generally. There is very little research involving hiring practices and university athletic departments, particularly head coaches. This study contributes to an understanding of head football coach hiring practices at the highest level of intercollegiate athletics. Moreover, this work provides a foundation for future research involving head coach hiring practices.

This work also contributes to the conversation concerning diversity and inclusion. Many scholars have pointed out the racial disparities in head football coaching hires within NCAA Division I and the lack of minorities considered for head football coaching positions. This study serves as a catalyst for best practices or policy considerations at the NCAA, athletic conference, or university level.

In recent years, there appears to be a developing trend of university's using outside search firms to assist in the hiring process for executive level positions and the head football coach position. This research helped identify the trends and changing landscape in hiring practices for head football coaches. Additionally, at the institutional level, there is a need for a best practices framework for hiring head football coaches. This research provided important insights that may aid in the development of a useful best practices framework for university

presidents, Athletic Directors, and other key stakeholders.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Based on the analysis of the data and review of the literature for this study, the following recommendations are presented:

1. Athletic Directors should:
    - receive appropriate and thorough training on interviewing best practices and legal considerations when hiring head coaches.
    - utilize a structured framework or specific process when hiring head coaches to eliminate biases and mistakes while maintaining consistency in the hiring process.
    - consider consulting with the university's chief human resource officer and utilize their expertise from a human resources perspective to assist in high profile searches.
    - consider utilizing the services of an external search firm and/or outside advisor to assist when hiring head football coaches.
    - consider the use of data analytics to vet candidates.
    - consider implementing a small search committee of no more than four individuals in the hiring process that may include any of the following: Athletic Director, Chancellor, Board of Trustee member (with intercollegiate athletics background), Senior Vice Chancellor, or Deputy Athletic Director. Timeliness and confidentiality are extremely important in the hiring process for a head football

coach and the process would not be efficient if one utilized a standard university search committee (example: 12-16 committee members) in the process.

- consider involving at least one individual (i.e., senior leadership level) external from the Athletic Department but internal to the University in the hiring process for a head football coach.
- consider supporting a NCAA policy that incorporates the importance of diversity and inclusiveness when hiring head football coaches. The policy and associated sanctions should hold athletic departments accountable.

2. University Chancellors/Presidents and Board of Trustees (Regents) should:
    - ensure that hiring policies and procedures are developed, updated, and shared with Athletic Directors and applicable university employees.
    - evaluate the effectiveness of head coach hiring practices and proactively identify issues and make positive changes for selecting highly effective head coaches.
    - consider the involvement and collaboration of key constituents when hiring a head coach in a high profile position (i.e., head football or basketball coach).

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Although this study assessed current hiring practices for head football coaches at the Division I FBS "Power 5" level, it did not attempt to create a best practices model or framework for hiring head coaches. Research should be conducted to create a best practices model or framework for hiring head coaches.

2. This study should be replicated and use more qualitative methodology including personal interviews so Athletic Directors can provide their perspective and insight on the head football coach hiring practice. A mixed methods approach would be valuable.
3. A case study would be interesting for future research. The case study could identify specific pieces of the hiring process and strategies used by Athletic Directors for effective hiring practices.
4. Research should be conducted throughout all of Division I FBS to learn the effective head football coach characteristics or criteria Athletic Directors view as important when considering and hiring head football coaches. Additionally, research should examine the advantages and disadvantages of using data analytics to help vet candidates.
5. This study should be replicated and include Athletic Director perceptions of effective head coach hiring practices in all sports.
6. Head coach hiring practices should be compared across Division I, II and III, and the associated challenges for hiring head coaches should be explored.
7. Research should be conducted throughout Division I FBS with a focus on interview strategy and the head coach search process. The research would examine different interview strategies and the learning outcomes associated with those strategies. The study would also explore which types of interview questions are most helpful in analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the head coach candidates.
8. Lastly, research should be conducted to link hiring practices with the effectiveness or performance of the head coach that has been hired for a particular position. Once an individual has been hired and retained, is their performance as a head coach aligned with the information or outcomes you discovered during the interview or hiring process?

APPENDIX A

ASSESSMENT OF HIRING PRACTICES FOR HEAD FOOTBALL COACHES

(SURVEY)

1. Please indicate which conference your institution is a member or an affiliate of:

2. How long have you served as an athletic director:
    - At your current institution?
    - In your career?

3. Does your Institution or Athletics Department have a written policy or guidelines for hiring head coaches?

    a. Yes
    b. No

4. Does your Athletics Department follow a specific hiring process for hiring a new head football coach?

    a. Yes
    b. No

5. Prior to an actually vacancy of the head football coach position, should an athletic director already have a "short list" of potential head coach candidates?

    a. Definitely yes
    b. Probably yes
    c. Might or might not
    d. Probably not
    e. Definitely not

6. Have you received any formal training/education for hiring head football coaches?

    a. Yes
    b. No

7. If you answered yes to question #6, have you received your formal training/education through the following methods? (Please select all that apply.)

    a. Seminar or equivalent (e.g., D-IA AD Institute program)
    b. Certificate Program
    c. Undergraduate School Course
    d. Graduate School Course
    e. On the job training
    f. Other, please specify _____

8. Have you hired a head football coach during your time as an Athletic Director, either at the institution where you are currently employed or by a former employing institution?

    a. Yes, at the institution I am currently employed by (If yes, continue with survey).
    b. Yes, at the institution where I previously served as an Athletic Director (please identify conference membership of said institution)
    c. Not while I was an athletic director (If no, thank you for participating).

9. Was there one individual in the Athletics Department who led the hiring process, a "point person or leader" who was most instrumental in hiring the head football coach?

    a. Yes: _title_____
    b. No

10. With the exception of an outside search firm, were any individual stakeholders outside of the Athletic Department and/or University faculty/staff (e.g., full-time or part-time employees) involved in the head football coach hiring process?

    a. Yes
    b. No

11. Did any of the following internal or external stakeholders assist in the hiring process for the head football coach? (Please check all that apply.)

    a. Student-Athlete(s)
    b. Enrolled Student(s)
    c. Faculty Member (Non-FAR)
    d. Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR)
    e. Athletic Department Staff
    f. University (Non-Athletic) Staff
    g. Chancellor/President
    h. Senior University Administrator (Non-Athletics Rep.)
    i. Board of Trustee Member (Regents, Directors, etc.)
    j. Alumnus/a of the Institution
    k. Former Varsity Letter Recipient
    l. Athletics Booster
    m. Head Coach (in any sport at your institution)
    n. Advisor in the college football industry (e.g., colleague, retired head football coach) other than external search firm
    o. Government official
    p. Other, please specify _____

12. How involved was the Chancellor or President of the University in the hiring process for the head football coach?

    a. A great deal
    b. A lot
    c. A moderate amount
    d. A little
    e. None at all

13. Does your hiring practice include a written job description or profile of the head football coach position?

    a. Yes
    b. No

14. How important is confidentiality in the hiring process for a head football coach?

    a. Extremely Important
    b. Very Important
    c. Moderately Important
    d. Slightly Important
    e. Not at all important

15. How important is the length of time for hiring a head football coach from initiating the process to closing the deal?

    a. Extremely important
    b. Very important
    c. Moderately important
    d. Slightly important
    e. Not at all important

16. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following sentence: It would be beneficial for Athletic Directors to use the services of an external search firm to assist in the hiring process for a new head football coach.

    a. Strongly agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Strong disagree

17. Have you used the services of an external search firm to assist with the hiring of a head football coach?

    a. Yes
    b. No

18. If you answered 'No' to question 17, what were the primary barriers that prevented you from hiring an external search firm to assist you in the hiring process? (Please select all that apply.)

    a. Financial resources
    b. Time
    c. Lack of familiarity with external consultants
    d. Personal preference: Did not want external consultant involved
    e. Other, please specify _____

19. If you answered 'Yes' to question 17, what characteristics or areas did the external search firm bring value to the hiring process? (Please select all that apply.)

    a. Saved Time
    b. Provided Confidentiality
    c. Integrity in Process
    d. Logistics (travel arrangements)

e. Assisted with Interviews and Scheduling
f. Conducted Reference Checks
g. Provided Candidate Profiles
h. Provided a Pool of Candidates
i. Assisted with contract negotiations
j. Liaison to Gauge Interest Level of Candidate(s)
k. Helped Guide/Assist in Overall Process
l. Performed Background Checks on Final Pool of Candidates
m. Other, please specify _____

20. a. If you answered 'YES' to question 17, how much did you pay for the search firms' services in your most recent head football coach hire? (Not including any travel or hotel related expenses)?

a. Less than $50,000
b. $50,001 - $100,000
c. $100,001 - $150,000
d. More than $150,000

20b. If you answered 'Yes' to question 17, from your perspective, was the search firm worth the cost?

a. Yes
b. No

20c. If you answered 'Yes' to question 17, how satisfied were you with the external search firm?

a. Very Satisfied
b. Somewhat Satisfied
c. Not Satisfied

21. Did you use a search or selection committee to assist with the head football coach hiring process?

a. Yes
b. No

22. If you answered 'Yes' to question 21, how many individuals were part of the search/hiring committee?

a. 1-3 individuals

b. 4-6 individuals
c. 7-12 individuals
d. 13 or more individuals

23. Which of the following stakeholders served on the search committee? (Please select all that apply.)

a. Athletic Director
a. Chancellor/President
b. Student-Athlete
c. Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR)
d. Faculty Member (Non-Athletics Rep.)
e. University Non-Athletic Staff
f. Senior University Administrator (Non-Athletic)
g. University Staff Member
h. Board of Trustee Member or equivalent
i. Alum of Institution
j. Deputy Athletic Director or Equivalent
k. Assistant or Associate Athletic Director
l. Athletics Booster
m. Former Football Varsity Letter Recipient
n. Head Coach
o. Government Official (City, County, State)
p. Other, please specify _____

24. Please rank the following nine selection criteria for a head football coach (1 Being Most Important, 9 Being Generally Important). All the items listed carry importance in the evaluation, but please rank them from the most important to generally important).

- Previous Head Coaching Experience
- Track Record of Supporting the Academic Mission (and Academic Achievement of Student-Athletes)
- Win/Loss Record as Head Coach or Coordinator at Previous Organization(s)
- Strong Leadership and Role Model for Student-Athletes
- Role as Ambassador for the Institution with Public Affairs and Development/Fundraising
- High Integrity and Character
- Strong Recruiter
- Connection to Institution
- Connection to Region where Institution is located

25. How do you evaluate the head coach candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities to determine if they meet the job requirements and expectations for success? (Please select all that apply.)

    a. Performance Record
    b. Team Academics (i.e. graduation rate and academic progress rate)
    c. Recruiting Rankings
    d. In-Person/Phone Interviews
    e. Personal References
    f. Background Checks

    Other, please specify _____

26. During the interview process, who from the process had direct interview time with the head football coach candidate(s)? (Please select all that apply)

    a. Athletic Director
    b. Deputy Athletic Director or Equivalent
    c. Chancellor/President
    d. Vice Chancellor/Vice President
    e. Board of Trustee Member (Regent)
    f. Athletics Booster
    g. Alum
    h. Former letter winner
    i. Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR)
    j. Current Football Student-Athlete
    k. Advisor in the college football industry (e.g., colleague, retired head football coach)
    l. External Search Firm
    m. Other, please specify _____

27. Does your institution have a written policy that requires you to interview at least one minority candidate for a head coaching position?

    a. Yes
    b. No

28. Is it a standard practice for you to interview at least one minority candidate as part of your hiring process for a head coach?

    a. Yes
    b. No

29. Would you support a policy similar to the NFL Rooney Rule that requires at least one minority candidate to be interviewed during any head football coach search? (Please select all that apply)

    a. Yes, would support a policy mandate from the NCAA level
    b. Yes, would support a policy mandate from the Conference level
    c. Yes, would support a policy mandate from the Institutional level
    d. Not sure
    e. No
    f. Other (Please Specify)

30. How important is it that the personal and professional values of the head coaching candidate are aligned with the norms and values of the institution and/or athletic department?

    a. Extremely important
    b. Very important
    c. Moderately important
    d. Slightly important
    e. Not at all important

31. How involved is the institution's human resource staff in the hiring process for a head football coach?

    a. A great deal
    b. A lot
    c. A moderate amount
    d. A little
    e. Not at all

32. Which of the following background checks were completed prior to signing an employment agreement with the head football coach? (Please select all that apply.)

    a. Criminal background check
    b. NCAA background check
    c. Education (degree) verification
    d. Other, please specify _____

33. Which of the following individuals conducted reference checks on the final candidate(s)?

    a. Athletic Director
    b. Deputy Athletic Director or Equivalent
    c. Chancellor/President
    d. Vice Chancellor/Vice President
    e. Board of Trustee Member (Regent)
    f. Athletics Booster

g. Alum
h. Former letter winner
i. University Human Resources
j. External Consultant/Search Firm
k. Other, please specify _____

34. Is it part of the standard practice for your top head football coach candidate(s) to meet with the Chancellor/President prior to making an official offer of employment?

a. Yes
b. No

35. Who approves the hiring of the head football coach at your institution? (Please select all that apply)?

a. Chancellor/President
b. Board of Trustees/Board of Regents
c. University Athletics Association Board
d. Athletic Director
e. Other, please specify _____

36. Who serves as the primary contract negotiator on behalf of the institution for the hiring of the head football coach?

a. Athletic Director
b. Deputy Athletic Director or equivalent
c. Chancellor/President
d. Vice Chancellor/Vice President
e. Chief Human Resource Officer
f. General Counsel
g. Other, please specify _____

37. Is there anything you would like to share that was not already covered in this survey?

38. Would you be interested in discussing any topics on this survey further? If so, what is the best means to reach you (please include contact information – either phone or email)

a. Yes, I would be interested
b. No, I would not be interested

Thank you so much for participating in this survey. You will receive a report of the results of the research upon its completion. If you have any questions, or would like to contact the researcher, Zac Saunders, please email zsaunders@athletics.pitt.edu.

APPENDIX B

CROSS-REFERENCE OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SURVEY ITEMS

Research Question:	Corresponding Survey Item:
1)What are the specific frameworks used for hiring head football coaches?	3,4,5,6,7,13,14,15,21,26,31,32,33,37,38
2)What stakeholders are involved in the hiring process for a head football coach?	8,9,10,11,12,22,23,34,35,36
3)How often are external search firms used in the process for hiring head football coaches?	16,17,18,19,20a,20b,20c
4)To what extent do athletic departments consider diversity in the hiring process?	27,28,29
5)How important is “fit” when considering candidates and hiring a head football coach?	24,25,30

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